



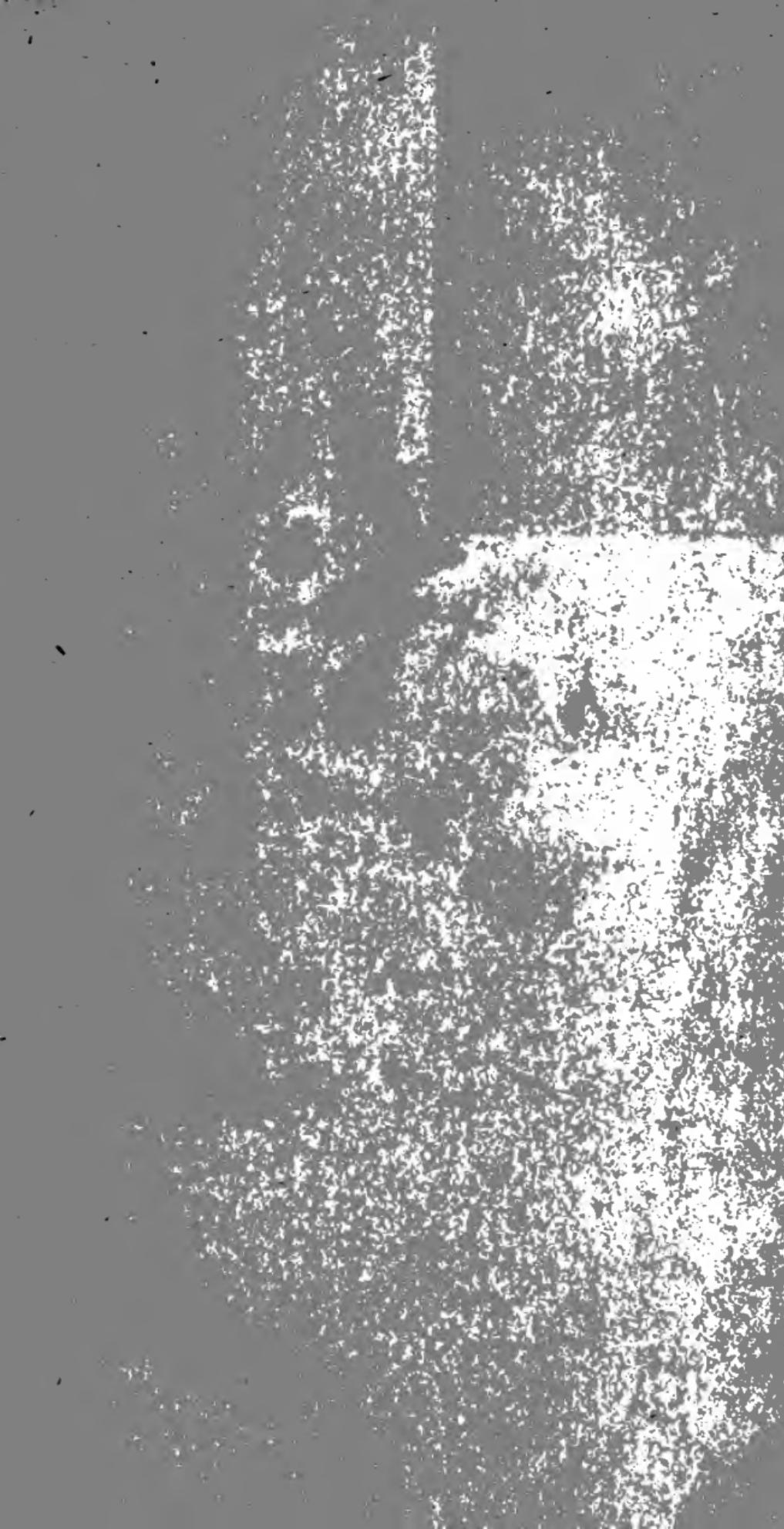
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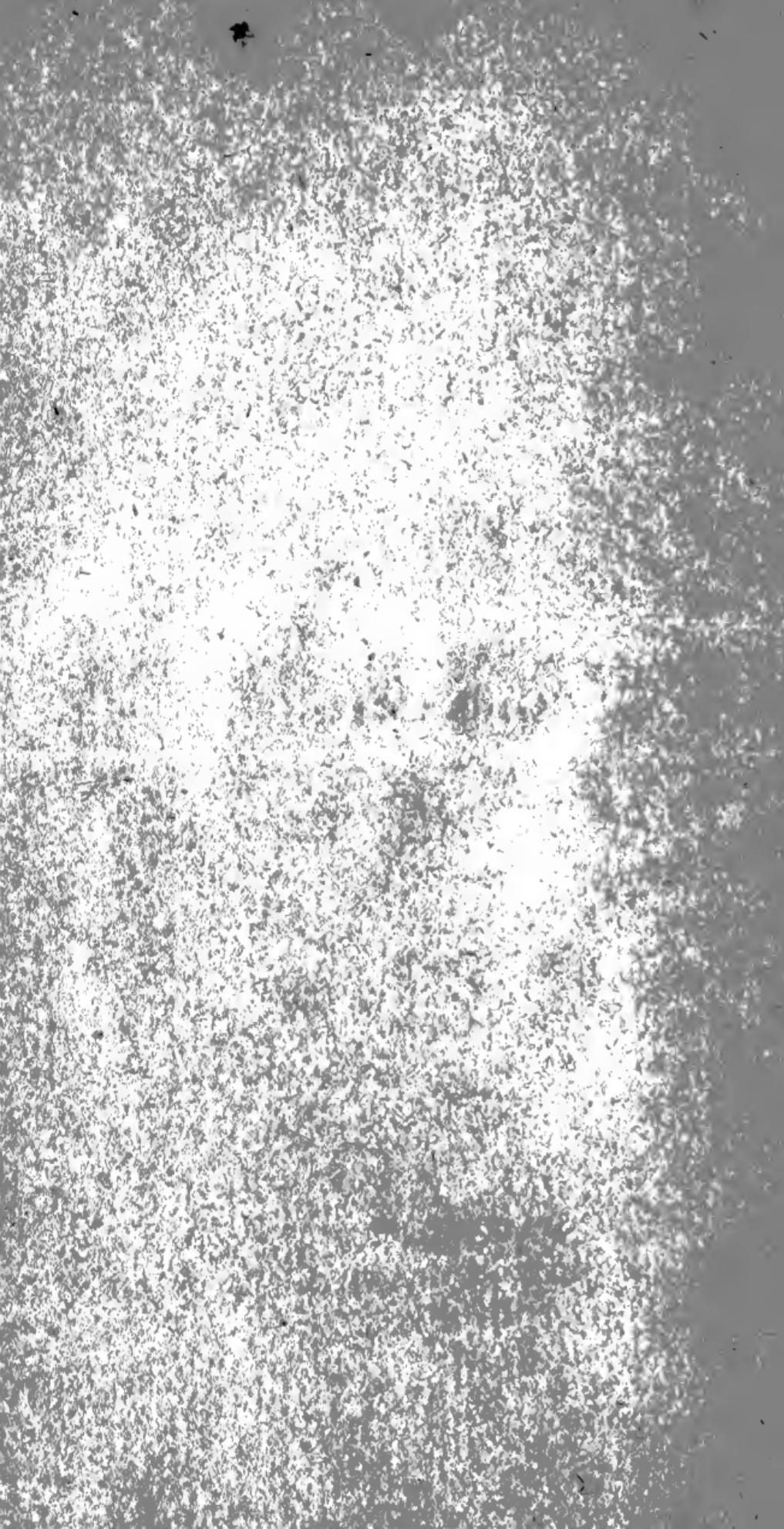
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CORASMIN.

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CORASMIN,

OR,

THE MINISTER;

A ROMANCE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE SWISS EMIGRANTS.

VOLUME II.

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CORASMIN,
OR
THE MINISTER.

CORASMIN to ALTUNO.

NOTHING can be farther from my intention, than to make the slightest complaint against Vizignan. I receive every day new proofs of the benignity of his character, his ardent zeal for the public welfare, his readiness to make any sacrifice for its attainment. Far from opposing obstacles now, to our schemes for

public improvement, he seconds them with ardour ; he anticipates our designs, and suggests new modes of fulfilling them, which had escaped ourselves. These dispositions open the fairest hopes for Cashmire. Yet, with the ardour of youth, and of a spirit yet unbroken by disappointment, he longs with a too eager impatience for the fruit of his labours. “ Every thing,” says he, “ has been done, to enable my subjects to improve their condition ; it seems impossible for man to do more : yet I cannot but observe, that hitherto the change is but small ; they proceed nearly as before, and seem little sensible to the exertions made in their favour.” “ Sire, I must entreat from you a certain patience. Nature grants to us, on no other terms, the fruit even of our noblest efforts. They must be thrown like seed into the ground, and, like it, must apparently perish ; till, in the lapse of time, they

silently spring up, and yield at last the long expected harvest. Fear not; nature will not be a faithless guardian of what is entrusted to her. Meantime, you may perform a pleasing duty: Make the tour of your dominions; see all that is done and doing; encourage industry, ennable it by the attentions you bestow, the interest you express in it; animate all that is done for the public good; know your subjects, and be known by them." "Your proposal charms me. Yes, I will set out immediately: let the proper directions be given without delay."

Thus we are involved in all the bustle of preparation. His Majesty travels in state, that, in the eyes of the multitude, an additional lustre may be thrown on those useful pursuits, to which his notice is to be devoted. It is grateful to me, yet painful too, to be absent from this place.

From the Same to the Same.

ALL being arranged, we set out yesterday. But the reception at first experienced by us was not altogether of that cordial nature which might have been hoped. Vizignan remarked, “The people now have surely no particular cause to complain. Why then do they thus shun me? They fly almost as they would before an enemy: I pass, as through a desert.” “Sire, I am not yet prepared with certainty to give an answer to your question; but I am much mistaken, if before evening I shall not be able to solve the difficulty, and that without any impeachment of the loyalty of your sub-

jects." I then had recourse to Muscati, who I shrewdly suspected would be able to throw some light upon the subject. When I noticed the circumstance to him, he immediately said, "Oh! I should not have imagined that this would have occasioned the smallest surprise. Were you never present at any of the royal journies? The same has invariably happened on every such occasion. Strong measures ought really to be taken to prevent and to punish it." "But, my friend, they must assuredly have some motive, some temptation; else why should such consternation be diffused by the mere presence of an indulgent Monarch?" "Oh! it is easy to guess their motive. You know it has always been very reasonably expected and required, that when his Majesty thus travelled, the districts through which he passed should supply all his wants: this has been the invariable system. Now, the wretches, rather

than comply with this reasonable and loyal requisition, chuse to quit their homes, and leave the country a desert."

"Pray, can you procure me an account of how much has been thus exacted on the present occasion?" "I will certainly do so: But may I be allowed to offer an advice against any proposal for abolishing the system: Why should his Majesty be unnecessarily involved in so great an additional expense? The people always reckon upon paying it, and never dream of obtaining the smallest compensation. Would there not be danger, that, by acting otherwise, we should teach them a bad lesson?" "My good friend, the only lesson that I can see is, to rejoice at their Sovereign's presence, instead of inwardly murmuring. Let me trust, therefore, to your activity, in procuring me the account alluded to." I then laid the whole of the transaction before the King. His answer was altogether such as I wished

and expected. The persons from whom the exactions had been made were called together, and, while they yet trembled under the apprehension of having new charges imposed, were agreeably surprised, by the whole being restored to them. The intelligence soon spread, and the changed aspect, on the following day, of the country through which we passed, clearly testified what had been the real cause of its former desertion.

From the Same to the Same.

WE are now returned to the capital, after a journey which has afforded to us all the gratification which we had anti-

cipated; and what was still more grateful, has presented many new opportunities of useful exertion. It was the anxious wish of his Majesty, to efface that dishonour which a barbarous pride had attached to employments the most conducive to the public welfare. All who had formed new establishments; who had made any improvement in the arts or in agriculture, were invited to his presence, his table: they were treated with a respect equal to that claimed by the highest nobility. By attentions so flattering, exertions which before had been respected only by the wise, became venerable also in the eyes of the multitude. Nor were encouragements of a more sensible nature wanting, though we were careful not to expect from them what they never could yield. Funds to a certain extent had been provided, which might enable us to extend aid to those who were encountering risks and difficulties, in order

to form establishments useful to the public. We were aware, indeed, that no branch of industry could be forced by such means; that they were injurious where they diverted it from the direction which it would spontaneously have taken. But, by their cautious and limited application, we could aid the first struggles of enterprise, could smooth the obstacles by which every new undertaking is opposed. Without exciting industry to any forced or premature growth, we could forward its progress in the direction which it was spontaneously taking.

In the course of that minute inspection which we thus made, I was able to prove to his Majesty, that his efforts had not been made altogether in vain. Though much had not yet been matured, the principles of improvement had begun actively to unfold themselves. Everywhere new establishments were forming; the husbandman was constructing canals

to water his fields ; in the cities new branches of industry were arising, and the old extending :—all men looked not to the present moment only, but laid schemes for futurity. The fruit was not yet formed; but all its infant buds were blowing. The King saw; he was satisfied with the prospects which Cashmire opened.

From the Same to the Same.

You recal me to the subject of Selinida: you ask again and again, what I now know, now feel? and I have resolutely desisted from naming her, who still lives in my most secret soul. But now I have indeed something to commu-

nicate. While we travelled through Cashmire, her idea reigned over me with less imperious sway ; the multiplicity of objects to which it was necessary that every other thought should yield, at least arrested any farther progress. But as we came in sight of the capital, my heart began to palpitate ; and on my arrival I felt renewed, in all their bitterness, the pangs of doubt and of hope. I experienced then an irresistible impulse to make some effort to deliver myself from these struggles. It appeared, that by proceeding to that spot near Chinar which had been named as the scene of the fatal rendezvous, some light must be thrown, whether it was of the nature so much dreaded. I felt indeed reluctant to go there mysteriously, almost as a spy, to pry into such secrets. Yet was there nothing dishonourable in the motive ; and I might thus have the fairest prospect of reaching the truth, when no op-

portunity was afforded to either party of throwing a veil over it. On feeling myself near the spot, I could scarcely breathe; I paused, unable to encounter what I might there meet; then, making an effort of desperation, I hurried forward. What a surprise! I saw a little mansion, with trees round it, disposed in the most pleasing order; a garden, through which a murmuring brook winded;—the sweetest scene of rural peace. My heart gladdened at the view, and clung involuntarily to its first hopes. Seeing an elderly female, of respectable and matron-like appearance, walking at a little distance, I contrived to join her, and to enter into conversation. As soon as I could trust my voice, I introduced the subject of the family at Chinar, and of Sel-mida. I asked, as if with a superficial curiosity, if she ever came here? It instantly struck me, that an air of mystery came over her countenance. All my fears reviv-

ed. I pressed anxiously, and by all possible channels, to obtain the wished-for information. Every question was evaded, and I soon saw that a designed and determined silence was to be maintained. On seeing all my efforts abortive, I burst at length into a paroxysm of despair. "I know," exclaimed I, "that she does. I know also with whom, and for what an unhallowed purpose. Conceal nothing, I adjure you, of what is done here." I know not, in my frenzy, what more I said, or what incoherent threats I might add, if all were not instantly told me. She was not intimidated, but rising into a glow of proud indignation, "How dare you, sir, speak thus? Yes, I own it, she comes, she often comes; but for no purposes except the best. You never did a greater wrong than you are now doing. Look here, sir, do you not see? What purpose can be answered by this little mansion, besides that for which it is em-

ployed? It is a school, sir, for the little girls of the neighbourhood, whom I am employed in instructing. You know not how much it was wanted, or what trouble this young lady took to establish it; for it is all done by her. Kind has she been to me! but that is little, compared to what she has done for the neighbourhood. Fye, sir! shame! shame! to speak thus of my lady Selmida." If the soul had suddenly quitted its mortal tenement, the change could not have been mightier than took place in me at this moment. There could be no doubt that thus it was: every object, the general aspect of the whole confirmed it clearly. Had it not been for the violence of my agitation, I must have sooner perceived it. It was impossible for me to utter a word; but my informant, conceiving my silence to be an admission of the injustice of my charges, became more cool. She then began to lament having

given me the intelligence. "Oh! sir, your hard words have wrested from me what ought to have remained a secret. She charged me diligently not to publish that it was she who places me here: She wishes it not to be known. I promised concealment. Indeed, sir, she must not know that you have heard it; she would be seriously angry." I could merely say with energy, "Not a word, not a word;" and then hastened away, that I might be by myself.

Yes, not a word shall be said, since she wishes it so. Still let her good deeds rest in that sacred silence: Still let her believe heaven alone conscious of them, and still do them for heaven alone. But what a new world is now opened to me! How cruel, how base these suspicions to which I was weak enough to listen! And this charge, which was to have wholly banished her from my esteem, how much higher than ever does it raise

her? True it is, mysteries still hang over her; but, after the manner in which this one has been cleared, can I doubt the result of farther inquiries? No; hope the most delicious again fills my soul. I trust now almost implicitly to that secret sentiment, which ever told me, that characters, so incorporated with her whole manner, with every word, could not be feigned.

Impressed with these feelings, as soon as the tumult of my soul had somewhat subsided, I could no longer abstain from the gratification, so hardly denied, of again visiting Chinar. Maled slightly noticed my absence, which I was able to excuse by my journey and the pressure of public business. But from Selmida the deep emotion which possessed me could not altogether be concealed: she seemed to perceive it, and shrunk back into somewhat more than her usual reserve. Still the little which did escape her so corres-

ponded to the best ideas of her, so bore the stamp of truth, that my surprise was again excited, how I should have listened even to the most plausible grounds of suspicion, that it was otherwise.

From the Same to the Same.

I HAVE had no inquiry to make; all has unfolded itself spontaneously.

I knew that an institution had been formed by some ladies of distinction and respectable character, for improving the condition of the female population in the capital. This plan appeared to me formed so judiciously, and so cautiously to avoid all the dangers to which such an

establishment would be liable, that I felt extremely disposed to second it by every aid in my power. Much was not required, because the design implied that, when fully established, it should support itself. But still something was necessary to smooth the first difficulties. With the view of considering how this might best be effected, I had arranged to have an interview with the lady who took the ostensible lead in the undertaking. In going to the place appointed, I was much surprised to find myself conveyed to the same spot which I had been assured was the scene of far different occupations. A presentiment the most pleasing instantly arose within me; the flutter of my spirits almost disqualified me from proceeding upon the business in which I was to engage. I dispatched it, however, but determined, before leaving the place, to obtain some light on a subject which so deeply interested me. I con-

trived, with the least possible appearance of affectation, to introduce the name of Selmida. I immediately observed in the lady a slight embarrassment, and a wish not to proceed further with the subject. Fortunately I had with me one who, from causes of which I was aware, strenuously supported the charges against her, and who, as appeared by the sequel, really believed them well founded. This personage instantly began, with a knowing and mysterious air, to intimate his acquaintance with her frequent visits to this neighbourhood. The lady assumed at first an air of ignorance, and slightly declared, she could not imagine what he alluded to. My companion, encouraged by this evasion, and hoping for additional proof of what he wished me to believe, repeated his assertion with new confidence, and mentioned circumstances sufficient to show that it had not been hazarded rashly. The lady then answered,

“ Then, since you know all, it is needless for me longer to make a secret of it. You are rightly informed ; she does come not unfrequently to this neighbourhood. Let me add, sir,” turning to me, “ this institution, which you so much approve, without her would never have been. I am now old, and much occupied with family concerns ; without her zeal and activity we could not have overcome all the obstacles which were to be encountered. But allow me to add, that I wish all this to be considered as strictly confidential. Her solicitude is extreme not to be drawn forth to public view. She exacted from me strict promises of silence, which I have broken, only because I saw that you already knew all. To prove how anxious she is to avoid public notice, I need only show you the very last letter I received from her.” She took out and read it ; the expressions were nearly as follow : “ My dear Madam,—I am quite delight-

“ ed to learn that our project is in so
“ favourable a train, and that there is
“ almost an assurance of its ultimately
“ succeeding. I am really most anxious
“ to see it carried into effect. If you can
“ point out any way in which I can aid it,
“ be assured of my zeal: But as to your
“ proposal of bringing me ostensibly for-
“ ward among its leaders, I must entreat
“ you never again to name it. I do not
“ dwell merely on my aversion to be
“ thus dragged into notice, though it
“ would certainly be great; but only
“ consider what an appearance it would
“ have, were a girl such as I to appear
“ among the heads of such an institu-
“ tion: It would be doing it a positive
“ injury. Again, therefore, my dear
“ Madam, I must beg that my name be
“ not mentioned in any manner what-
“ ever.”

I leave you to judge what I felt after
the perusal of this letter. My compa-

nion, who was somewhat disconcerted at finding such a result of his inquiry, sought now to efface the impression. "Certainly, Madam, this young lady seems to have been well disposed to the undertaking. But it can be your modesty only which induces you to transfer to her the chief merit. I do not see much which it could be in her power to do for promoting the object. She gave probably her good wishes, and that was all." "Oh, sir, how very much you are mistaken! The exertions made by her are quite incredible. As an example I shall only mention, that at one time, when funds were wanting, she disposed of one of her most valuable jewels, in order to supply the deficiency." I was satisfied: the last link was now broken, on which my suspicions hung.

And she is then truly all which I had fancied and hoped! Her image bursts forth brighter than ever from beneath

the veil of cruel suspicion by which it was shaded. I see in her, not merely an instinctive and individual kindness; not the virtues only which might be the ornament of private life: I see beneficence guided by the most enlarged views, capable of embracing the widest circle to which its influence could extend. This is one, whom I could associate in every sentiment, in every scheme which had the great interests of mankind for its object. To have her ever by me, were the best security for keeping alive those sentiments which it is my first ambition to cherish. Some failing, indeed, some alloy, the general lot of humanity warns me to expect; but there could be nothing now, which would not render this union supremely desirable. I have nothing to think of, but how to secure the heart of her who appears invested with qualities so precious, so captivating.— The issue of this pursuit is still involved

in doubt. Hope is not denied; yet are there not wanting circumstances to excite my apprehension. But at this moment I am sensible only to the joy of finding her as amiable, as perfect, as hope had painted. It is, as it were, bliss to me, that there should be such a creature on earth, even though she were never destined to be mine. The tumult which shook my being, when racked by doubts and suspicions, is at an end. I can now renew my intimate intercourse as a friend, in the hope of one day being something more.

From the Same to the Same.

AGAIN, as at a former period, every interval allowed from objects more imperiously urgent, is spent at Chinar. How happy a change, and how high the pleasures which there await me! The society which I meet is select, and entirely suited to my taste. But it is still more pleasing when all strangers are absent, and I can occupy myself only with the object which wholly engrosses me. We are now established as friends; and our sentiments are communicated freely on every subject. Yet the studied reserve of her manner, instead of disappearing,

is only the more cautiously maintained ; there seems an anxiety to impress that it is friendship merely ; our souls communicate, only as from a distance. I cannot yet then account her as mine ; yet do I not therefore despair. I fondly flatter myself, that there is a correspondence in our inmost souls, which, when time unfolds it, must finally unite them ; that, without her being conscious of it, they are insensibly drawing nearer. Still, as before, I am prone to believe, that this outward coldness may be that of a mind firm in its native dignity, and jealous of appearing to be influenced by other than personal motives. If it be so, she will soon, I trust, find me as little disposed to advance such claims, as she is to admit them. Any immediate urgency, however, would thus be premature, and might be fatal to my hopes. I content myself, therefore, with what can now be obtained. I enjoy the present bliss,

without any overwhelming fears for the future.

HINDALI *to SELMIDA.*

BEING now in the capital for a few days, I am able to give you some information respecting the affair in which you take so great interest. I enclose a few notes which I have received on the subject. All proceeds in the most prosperous train. The lady by whom the funds are administered, talks already of returning to you what you so generously advanced. I supposed myself safe in assuring her, that no urgency was to be dreaded on your part.

And now, my dear friend, there is a subject on which I must write to you very seriously. Every one sees the frequent visits of Corasmin to Chinar, and every one can very well conjecture the cause. Whence, then, this studied reserve? Have you really formed the serious resolution to decline such a connection? I speak not of its external advantages; you have friends enough who will not suffer you to overlook them. But can you hope to find merit more brilliant than now courts your acceptance? Is such a lover to be suffered to sigh in vain? Where, then, do you mean that all this should terminate? You have rejected one of the first offers which Cashmire could afford; you have refused another, which your friends considered as eligible. In both these cases, indeed, you had plausible reasons to assign; but here you have none whatever. You must positively break silence, and say

what are your views and intentions; and if you reject this lover, when and how you expect to find another equally worthy.

SELMIDA to HINDALI.

I AM entirely pleased with the first part of your letter; and you certainly have the fullest authority from me for saying what you did say. But, oh! to what a wicked conclusion have you come? Truly, before reproaching me with declining this offer, ought you not to have had some certainty, some probability at least, of its having been made? I can assure you most solemnly, that not

a word was ever uttered to me upon the subject. All you have to proceed upon is, that Corasmin occasionally visits Chinar. But, pray, does it necessarily follow, that he comes with the precise design you allude to? Is it impossible, that any young man should enter the house, unless for the sole purpose of making love to me? Is there nothing in the character of my father, nothing in the society assembled at our house, which can attract a person of his character? What charm can this important personage, this manager of the affairs of a great nation, find in the conversation of a giddy, thoughtless girl like your Selmida? At all events, does it become me to be making up my resolution before the slightest hint has been dropped, pointing at such an object? I see, then, no ground you have to say a word more to me upon this subject.

HINDALI to SELMIDA.

Now, my dear, I am seriously angry with you for this last letter. Hypocrite! you pretend, alone of all the world, to be blind in an affair which so nearly concerns you. For what purpose, do you suppose, are these frequent visits? If he comes merely to enjoy your father's society, why then is so much of his conversation directed to another quarter? Or, if he seeks only to enjoy the society which you assemble around you, whence the evident pleasure with which he finds that all strangers are absent? In short, you know quite as well as I, what the

attraction is which draws him thither. In vain would you urge, that this may be unmeaning gallantry, a mere transient preference: This surmise, which might be applicable to the case of others, is at once repelled by the situation, the character of Corasmin. He has not declared himself: but is it possible that he should, when all his attentions are received with a politeness so cold and distant? Indeed, my friend, I must seriously tell you, that your insensibility to such merit appears to me quite incomprehensible. I cannot reconcile it to my ideas, either of your own character, or of the standard by which you judge others. Is it that you can discover in him nothing superior to ordinary men? or do you image to yourself something still higher? Your ideas then are quite visionary; for, rest assured, that he has the qualities necessary for your happiness, beyond what, in such a world as this, you had a right to

hope for. Come, then, my friend, open yourself to me; throw off that reserve, which I can call by no name but that of prudery; and if you be really determined to shut your heart against this lover, let me at least know the reason why.

SELMIDA *to* HINDALI.

WAS ever poor girl persecuted as I am? This man has never opened his lips to me on any but the most general topics. All that can be alleged is, that occasionally, when he has nothing else to do, he pays a visit to my father. Yet upon this I am interrogated; I am expected to have my resolution entirely

made up, to accept the moment he deigns to ask. All this, I really think, is overstepping the license allowed even by our most intimate friendship. However, since I see I can enjoy no rest without saying something, I shall endeavour to throw together such ideas as have floated in my mind, on the supposition that there were really any thing in what you insist upon. You wrong me greatly in supposing, that I am insensible to the merit of Corasmin. It were enough, that I should hear him talked of as I do, by all whose opinion I most esteem. But I trust there is something in myself also, which can enable me to form an estimate of his great qualities. I esteem, I almost revere him : I regard him as the best of ministers ; the benefactor of his country. There is nothing in what I have seen of him, which does not tend to heighten the high idea I had previously formed. And yet, with all this, I shrink, decid-

edly shrink, from the prospect of such an union. I cannot very fully analyze the feelings which have given rise to this aversion ; but I shall give the best account of them that I am able. Consider, if your wishes were fulfilled, what I should then become. I should be minister's lady ; the talk of all societies ; the idol of the popular gaze. This is a situation entirely foreign to my inclination, to my sex. I should be dazzled by a light so glaring. It appears to me, that woman, thus placed, is entirely removed out of her natural sphere. My ideas, my habits, are all formed for private life. Expose me not to that blaze. Allow me, as hitherto, to glide silently down the stream. I will even confess to you other sources of this reluctance. You imagine, perhaps, that I should be flattered by the idea of being raised to a situation so brilliant. Quite the contrary : I cannot brook the idea of a part-

ner who would so entirely eclipse me. A portion only of his heart would be mine; higher concerns must continually call him off. I could not, and ought not to be to him more than an object entirely secondary. Yet it would be universally thought, that, in receiving his suit, a singular honour was conferred upon me. He himself even, though I cannot accuse him of allowing any symptoms of such a feeling to escape, could scarcely fail secretly to entertain it. This is that, at which the little pride of my heart revolts. I wish for one whose heart could be more entirely my own. You, I presume, will term all this caprice, extravagant pride; but it is something of which I cannot divest myself. You insist, that by my manner I deter him from making any declaration. I ardently wish that he never should. I am very ambitious to secure him as a friend, an intimate friend. I know not why I should

suppose he wishes to be more: but I am anxious that he should not ask it, nor I be under the necessity of refusing. I wish to spare him even this small mortification. If, then, my manner is such as to deter any proposals, without absolutely producing alienation, this has been precisely what I aimed at. I flatter myself that love, if there exist any, may gradually, by the absence of hope, be converted into friendship. Thus I have, at full length, communicated all the sentiments which occupy me on this momentous subject. You may laugh at them, or may scold; but you will not find it easy to shake my purpose.

CORASMIN to ALTUNO.

SINCE the pleasing discoveries which I lately announced to you, my visits to Chinarr became more frequent. The pleasures of that society were for some time unmixed and y inexpressible. All the qualities which I had yet seen only imperfectly, unfolded themselves in full lustre, poisoned no longer in my eyes by doubt or suspicion. I saw a soul which expanded itself, as it were spontaneously, to embrace the greatest interests of the human race; which cherished them as its own most intimate and dearest concerns; which could rapidly comprehend all the principles by which public happiness was

promoted. Yet was its ardour tempered by an exquisite feeling of the limits within which its range was to be confined. There appeared no ambition to dictate or to rule; no wish to throw herself out of the natural sphere of her sex. Public concerns were viewed with interest, with feeling; but not as the scene in which herself was to move. I should have her for a confidant, a sharer of all my sentiments, without any dread of intrigue or petty interference. Her soul rises without effort to the utmost height; yet, when the elevating impulse is withdrawn, it sinks spontaneously into private life as into its place of rest. In her, too, I see every thing which could enliven and embellish intervals in which public care would be suspended; a sunshine of gaiety, always tempered, always pleasing; a feeling almost instinctive of whatever is beautiful in nature and in the arts. But the delight with which I

made these observations was gradually alloyed. The hope of a tender return remained still unfulfilled. Our communication, indeed, is still friendly, but still maintained at the same cold and cruel distance ; still the same apparent determination, that it shall be friendly only. Thus, the view of her excellencies is embittered, as it becomes more and more doubtful if they will ever become mine. Never, indeed, can I wish for a return of those pangs which were caused by the dread of her unworthiness ; yet those I now suffer, from a cause quite opposite, threaten to become almost as intense. Yet gleams of hope still illumine my prospects ; and though I dare not yet attempt to lift the veil which covers them, I endeavour patiently to wait the moment which may be more auspicious to my wishes.

From the Same to the Same.

ALL, with regard to Selmida, has been precisely as when I last wrote; and the longer it so continues, the cloud of doubt and suspense becomes darker. What a fatal, terrible empire, this girl has over me! Involuntary sighs burst from me; and often, when my thoughts should be quite otherwise occupied, some word, some look, comes across me, and suddenly all my soul is at Chinar. Again I begin to dread, lest Cashmire and its welfare should cease to be my supreme passion. With alarm, I feel its sway almost disputed. I must mortify this passion, must press it down, till it sinks

to the just level. No other object but that to which I am consecrated, must rule over me with this resistless empire. I feel, indeed, that the task is hard ; but every means shall be employed : and none, certainly, have more ample resources than I. The objects which solicit my attention, and the mighty interests attached to them, are surely sufficient to fill the soul, and exclude every other idea. The aspect too, under which they appear, becomes every day more grateful. Scarcely do they leave any private suffering, for which they would not compensate. The kingdom is gradually moulding into that form, to the production of which we looked forward as the reward of our labours. In the lapse of time, opportunity has been afforded for maturing and carrying forward all those plans, of which at first it was only possible to lay the foundation. The empire of justice over every rank, to establish

which formed the grand basis of our efforts, has now acquired such strength, that its exercise does not excite even a murmur. The measures adopted for improving the arrangements connected with the revenue, have been attended with the desired result. Not only have all fears of financial ruin vanished ; but a large surplus has arisen, which enables us to relieve those imposts which press on the urgent wants of the people ; those which lie as a weight upon public industry ; in fine, all those which appear peculiarly adverse to the national welfare. The chains too, by which industry was withheld from taking its natural course, have, by a succession of gentle efforts, been gradually loosened, and care has been taken to impose no new fetters. A silent change is thus effected ; and those active and improving powers which nature has implanted, being no longer confined and thwarted, display all their native energy. Already a grand

improvement is every-where visible ;— yet is this only an earnest of what is to come ; and the promise is sure. **We will** reap the fruit of our labours.

In removing these obstructions to public prosperity, we have performed our first and greatest duty. So ample is the beneficence of nature, that no higher good can be done by the wisest of legislators, than not to oppose her operations ; but when this duty has been done, a natural ambition springs, to co-operate in her designs by some efforts more direct and powerful. I am unwilling to believe, that amid the ample provision which is made, independent of all human efforts, there is not still, for those who preside over human destiny, a field of beneficence left open. It is for them, indeed, cautiously to study and mark the limits within which their influence is confined. Some impulse may be given to the powers of activity, when they stagnate

through mere sluggishness and inertion. Exertions are required from the friends of humanity, to diffuse over an extensive empire even the most obvious and certain improvements ; to overcome that power of rooted habit which resists their communication. Institutions yet struggling with all the evils of infancy, may be nursed and protected. When undertakings are of such magnitude that private resources are nearly, but not quite adequate to their accomplishment, a small and reasonable aid may turn the balance, and enable them to proceed. Some, too, are so mighty, and connected with such numerous and varied interests, that they seem beyond the reach of individual accomplishment, and belong properly to the general resources of the nation. Several such objects seem now to present themselves. One is, to unite by a canal the two great rivers, which, after washing our eastern and western

frontiers, flow in opposite directions, to lose themselves in separate and distant oceans. Flowing like a stream of life through the centre of the kingdom, through its most fertile and happiest districts, it would enable them to communicate with each other, and with remote regions. The undertaking is great, and large funds are necessary to ensure its success; but, in the present aspect of our affairs, there seems no reason to dread that these obstacles should prove invincible. The Monarch feels extreme ardour in the prosecution of the scheme, and expresses his readiness to make even great sacrifices, should these be found necessary. But I trust, that activity and economy will alone supply sufficient resources.

This is the object of the first magnitude; but there is another to which our attention will be at the same time directed. The mighty chain which separates

Cashmire on the one side from the Tartarian regions, and on the other from the fertile plains of India, forms at present an almost impenetrable bar to commercial intercourse. A highway which might scale these barriers, would open to the kingdom vast sources of opulence. Enabling it to command the production of the most opposite climates, it might also become the medium for transmitting them to other regions. Notwithstanding, therefore, the obstacles which are to be surmounted, we have determined to include this in our undertaking, and to proceed to its execution with every possible dispatch.

Hitherto, as you have seen, our efforts have been turned almost solely to improve the outward circumstances of this people; to afford them the means of multiplying their numbers, of augmenting their fortunes. While the nation suffered, it was necessary to consider, first,

how its more obvious and sensible evils were to be remedied. The diffusion of knowledge, the provision of the means of mental improvement, notwithstanding their paramount importance, were almost unavoidably postponed. But, now that a period of repose is granted; now that the foundations of public prosperity are laid, and the edifice rising, room is left for other cares. Viewing man in that higher part, to which his physical nature is only subservient, an ardent desire springs, that every instrument of improvement which nature places within the reach of the legislator, should be employed to the utmost extent. No serious obstacle threatens to obstruct the fulfilment of these wishes. His Majesty, who possesses a love of science beyond what usually falls to the lot of a Monarch, is ready to sanction and second every measure which affords a promise of extending its influence. I pro-

ceed, therefore, immediately to concert with Zingani, to whom this province peculiarly belongs, the best means of fulfilling our object.

CORASMIN to ZINGANI.

You, my dear friend, have pressed me repeatedly, and with earnestness, that something should be undertaken for the improvement of this people, in higher respects than those which relate to their outward condition. Perhaps, amid recent tumults and difficulties, I have not been sufficiently prompt in attending to these suggestions. Yet rest assured, that I always considered whatever could be

done for their promotion, as the highest function which a minister could fulfil. A necessary previous step, however, was to afford relief from the immediate pressure of want and suffering. These, it behoved us first to banish, by removing the causes from which they sprung. The magnitude of the labour which was requisite for this end, and of the obstacles which arose, left little leisure or opportunity for pursuits less urgent. Even now, I enter upon them, not without trembling. This is a province which a higher power has, as it were, reserved to itself; and in the administration of which we are admitted only to a small and limited share. Scarcely can we move without some danger of thwarting, instead of promoting its grand operations. Think not, however, that I say this with any other object, than to impress the necessity of caution and reflection in this great work. Much, I believe,

may be done; and I am truly anxious, that, of all that can, nothing should be omitted. Now, my friend, it is to you that I mainly trust for aid. Withdrawn from the public gaze, you devote yourself to meditate in silence on the welfare of your country, or the sources of public happiness. You form the tie which unites us with all the wise and the learned of Cashmire: through you we have availed ourselves of this knowledge, to enlighten the decisions which are to fix the fortune of nations. Be you now the channel through which our merited bounty may flow. You know, and can search out the men on whom it may be most wisely and justly bestowed. Employ all your discrimination in making the choice. Draw forth, not those who eagerly produce themselves; not those who exhibit only an empirical and imposing language; above all, not those who degrade themselves and their genius, by

interested servility; but those who venerate science for itself, and not merely as an instrument of advancement. Keep back the venal flattering crowd, and let our favours court the proud genius which disdains to ask. Honours unsought must testify the respect in which they are held. Even on these let them not be indiscriminately lavished. Let us beware of feeding an imprudence to which active and powerful minds are liable. A moderate and prudent bounty will suffice to guard them from the inroads of want, to enable them to devote their powers uninterruptedly to the public welfare. The countenance of royalty itself will be ready to throw a lustre around them, even in vulgar eyes.

What you report, concerning the neglected state of the royal libraries, and collections of scientific instruments, merits, certainly, the most serious attention. Let proper persons be chosen to

superintend these establishments. Care will soon be taken to set aside a sum so considerable, as may soon raise them to all the lustre of which they are susceptible. Let these repositories contain a complete magazine of the instruments of human knowledge; and let them all be open to the instructors of mankind. Let them not be made a mere subject of ostentatious parade; but let admission, under proper regulations, be afforded with the utmost facility, to all by whom these means of science may be employed for the public welfare.

Such are the modes by which we must endeavour to promote the discovery and extension of science. But then follows another object, of higher importance still, and in which our exertions, I trust, will prove more efficacious. Its benefits must be diffused; that ignorance must be dispelled, in which the greater part of the people are still involved. To the for-

mation of some comprehensive institution, for the accomplishment of this object, we are to look forward as one of the prime benefits which our ministry is to confer. Some caution indeed is necessary, of which there are not wanting friends carefully to remind us, and even to advise, that no attempt should be made to disturb the present sway of ignorance. The people, we are told, are at present much quieter, and more manageable: they have all the ideas that are necessary to make them good subjects; to know more, might only render them discontented and unfit for their situation. It is dangerous, we are assured, to admit new conceptions into such heads. I need not, to you, enter into a refutation of such arguments. It might not be safe, however, to hold them in too utter contempt. Let us not aim at more than is consistent with the present condition and nature of man. Our wish must be,

to diffuse a system of safe and salutary instruction; not indeed to make a nation of philosophers, (idle mockery, by which the opponents of the system attempt to expose it to ridicule,) but that knowledge which is to make him acquainted with his own nature, its origin, its duties, its destination. Be assured, that all our efforts will be seconded by those for whose benefit they are destined. The nation, soon appreciating the value of this boon, will eagerly employ the means of procuring it for themselves. It is more desirable that they should; and all that is expedient for us is, to facilitate its acquisition.

Such, it appears to me, is the result of the views which we have jointly considered, and matured. The longed-for time of their accomplishment seems arrived: Caution must not even here be entirely forgotten; yet, be assured, that whatever may appear necessary for ac-

complishing these purposes, the extremity will be hard indeed which shall prevent us from furnishing it. You, I repeat it, must be the main instrument; yet, wherever my aid or efforts can second you, be assured I shall consider it as the highest privilege to be furnished with the opportunity.

CORASMIN to ALTUNO.

ALL the arrangements are made for carrying into execution those improvements to which I alluded in my last. Zingani presides: He possesses leisure, knowledge of the men, and of the subjects, beyond either myself or any other

of our co-adjutors. Upon the whole, there seems ground to entertain the best hopes of success, and, at present, all our affairs wear an aspect entirely auspicious; such as might well console me, even under very severe sufferings which were to be endured by myself alone. Yet, with regard to that affair also to which I particularly allude, since you indulgently express an interest, hope again begins to dawn. The general manner, indeed, is still the same; still no intimacy is admitted, and as I approach, she withdraws herself, as it were, to a distance. Yet, whatever was peculiarly cold and repulsive in her deportment sensibly diminishes. Testimonies of esteem are now given in a manner more decisive and undisguised, sometimes even with warmth. In alluding to any improvement which may have been made relative to the public welfare, she will mention it in such a manner, her lips

and eyes speaking at once, as would to me be a rich reward, had it even been all. I dare not urge the decision of my fate; yet I see room to hope, that a favourable time may come; sometimes even feel confident that it will. That correspondence of sentiment, which, as our intercourse continues, is the more unfolded, will, I trust, draw the tie closer and closer, till it becomes indissoluble. Thus the cruel anxiety which once darkened my prospects is greatly relieved, and the clouds of suspense, which still occasionally impend, serve only to brighten the sunshine of hope by which they are dispersed.

HINDALI to SELMIDA.

I NEVER thought I should have to accuse you of coquetry; yet I really do not at present see how you can escape the imputation. Corasmin's attachment to you has long been obvious to the most common observation; and it is pretty evident now to those who see you together, that his attentions are not very unwelcome: yet, the distance at which you still hold him, the gentle, indeed, yet fixed reserve, which appears in your deportment, is still such as must inevitably deter him from advancing farther. Again I say, what do you propose to yourself? He evidently seeks something

more than friendship, and never will rest satisfied with that alone. If, then, you are determined finally to reject him, why do you encourage false hopes ; for such he must surely entertain, from the evident pleasure which you betray in his society ? I positively think you do not act fairly to such a lover, by keeping him suspended in this state of uncertainty : you should take a decisive part ; ample time has been given to form your opinion. Far be it from me to drive you to any precipitate step ; but really I think the time is come seriously to consult your own breast, and consider what you are to do.

ALL my hopes are over, of your ever ceasing to harass me upon this subject! After I had fully explained my motives, and, as I thought, to your satisfaction, you return to the charge as if not a word had been said. All the defence you can make for this new attack is by alleging, that my sentiments towards Corasmin have become more favourable. I do not mean to say, that he has lost by being seen more intimately. My opinion of him, which was never very unfavourable, has certainly been raised by farther acquaintance. Yes, my esteem is now admiration: happy, I own it, will she be,

to whom the secrets of that heart are unfolded. Yet still it is not a happiness for me. Perhaps, indeed, if I could have him, not surrounded by that blaze ; if, without so cruel a loss to mankind, he could be mine, wholly mine :—But, no ! I cannot think myself fitted for such a station, even were it my wish. To be the worthy wife of Corasmin, appears to me a duty too awful. Some higher mind must fulfil that function. The nearer that the glittering prospect appears, the closer still does my heart cling to its sacred retreat. But you make me anxious, by what you say respecting the equivocal nature of my conduct. You insist, that I act unjustly towards Corasmin, by admitting him to the privileges of friendship, when I am determined against ever granting more. You allege, that I thus encourage false hopes ; you level me with the vainest of my sex. This is a serious charge, and I

am determined to consider it very seriously. I have said it: I wish him as a friend, a chosen friend; to cast him off as such, would be a great sacrifice. I had hoped, that by a fixed reserve, combined with friendly intercourse, any other sentiments, if really entertained, might be converted into those which I seek for. I still do not see why it may not be so; but if you are serious in your allegation, I shall certainly run any risk, rather than to do that of which you accuse me. Write me again: Carefully weigh the subject, and give me your full and fixed opinion. I do not promise absolutely to conform to it; but you may rest assured, that it will be pondered very carefully.

had great difficulties of his own to undergo, and many trials and tribulations to undergo. He did not desire to do anything to give difficulty to Coras-min, and, therefore, he did not do any thing to vex him, but, on the contrary, he did his best to please him, and to give him every comfort and every assistance in his power.

HINDALI to SELMIDA.

YOUR ideas on the subject of my letter have taken quite a different turn, from what I expected. Nothing, I assure you, could be farther from my design, than to cause the banishment of Coras-min. No! no! I really believe you may make yourself quite easy upon the subject. I acquit you fully of all coquettish intentions; and, so long as your manner is such as to deter him even from declaration, it can scarcely be accused of inspiring deceitful hopes. Besides, I have little apprehensions now of his having any very cruel disappointment to sustain. But I had hoped, that my letter

would have laid open to you something of what is passing within you. You still profess esteem, warm indeed, but yet esteem only. Oh ! Selmida, know your own heart : Such an esteem, for such an object, be assured, is not far from love. But you shift your ground : you pretend the want of that gravity which befits the station of minister's lady. Oh, what an idle apprehension ! Gay, I own you are, but neither with a frivolous nor thoughtless gaiety. You cannot compose yourself to the formal treatment of trifles, and, whenever no strong sentiment possesses you, give way to a light, playful, almost infantine gaiety. But were not this needful to cheer the gloom of public care, to make him forget that he is minister ? Heaven, when it gave you that greatness of soul, for which the highest lot on earth is not too high, could prepare nothing for you but such a destiny. Far, then, from wishing you to banish him, I

only wish to make you feel how impossible it would be to take that step; and, I persuade myself, you will not be long of feeling it.

CORASMIN to ALTUNO.

My letters must change their tone. Farewell for a time to peaceful occupations; farewell to all thoughts of love! A mighty alarm is given. War, a terrible war, against assembled nations, is now to be waged:—Cashmire has her existence to fight for. The war-like sovereign who lately ascended the throne of Bukaria, has conceived the ambition of subjugating the East. His first

enterprises have been successful: the neighbouring nations, overawed or seduced, have submitted and joined his standard; and he is preparing to pour desolation over the Indian plains. Cash-mire stands now as the only barrier of civilized mankind. She takes the field, not in her own defence alone; a holy cause is submitted to her, which, if she defend, the gratitude of the world will be due. A duty which supersedes every other, then, calls us to arms; and, till that is fulfilled, we must suspend every thought of peaceful improvement. Amid a necessity so urgent, it may not be possible for me to communicate an account of my proceedings so regularly as hitherto. But, though past the age of arms, you can still aid me and your country with advice in this extremity. I trust then to your giving it as fully and frankly as ever.

CORASMIN to ZINGANI.

My dear Friend,—Your inclination has hitherto been fulfilled, in devoting yourself tranquilly to the arts of peace, and the improvement of your country. But you see the crisis to which we have arrived. This exigency forbids us to indulge a thought, or expend an effort, unless on one single object. All our aim must be, to raise a barrier against the mighty desolation which threatens. I seek not to call you into the field, whether your ardent zeal might impel you. It is, as before, your counsel, your knowledge, that I ask. You have observed, that our military establishment has not

been neglected. Nay, I cannot help triumphing a little, when I recollect how you murmured that resources, which you could wish to employ otherwise, were, amid profound peace, diverted into this channel. Every thing possible was done to preserve the kingdom in a state of full preparation for such a crisis as has now arrived. Amid profound peace, the possibility of sudden war was never lost sight of. The magnitude of the army was measured by the resources which our wealth and population afforded. Care was taken, to ascertain and appropriate every improvement in the art which had been effected within the sphere of our observation.

You will now own, that all these preparations had other objects in view than the mere indulgence of military parade. They will all, however, prove now insufficient. Cashmire must be saved, not by common means. The united strength

of her sons must be called forth, in a cause where all their highest interests are at stake. But so great a display of national energy would in vain be attempted by authority alone. National enthusiasm must be kindled; every engine for exciting it must be put in motion. Think, then, my friend, meditate deeply, search the records of history, weigh the nature of man, devise how the public mind may be best acted upon. One thing I consider as fixed, that no attempt be made to conceal the danger. The people must be warned of its full magnitude, otherwise we cannot expect them to second the vast efforts which are necessary to meet it. Alarm may be the first consequence; but soon, I trust, their native courage will revive, and the depth of the impression first made, will afford a grand impulse to their subsequent efforts.

ZINGANI to CORASMIN.

THE subject on which you write me is of awful importance indeed. You wrong me if you imagine, that, under the love of repose, I cherish any wish to withdraw from my country, in this necessity, every active exertion of which I am capable. You will not, I trust, deny me the privilege of following you to the field, and exposing my life in her cause. Meantime, whatever advice I can give is most fully at your command; though I do not think you stand much in need of it. You have secured to the Sovereign the people's love; you have afforded them cause to prefer his administration to

all others ; much indeed have you given them to lose. With ardour, I trust, will they follow you to the field. But there is still one step more, which I must suggest and earnestly press upon you ; which, as appears to me, can alone annihilate the hopes of the invader. Cashmire has not forgotten the time, when the assembled nation deliberated concerning all the measures which concerned the public welfare : She remembers that period, and ceases not to regret it, and to consider herself oppressed and degraded, because it is so no longer. A beneficent administration has merely repressed these murmurs, has conciliated her affection to the persons of those who rule, but has not obliterated the memory of her ancient freedom. Here, then, would be a mighty engine for calling all the energies of the nation into action. The people, then, if I err not greatly, would spontaneously offer more than any sovereign would

dare to demand. I give this advice, as I have ever done, frankly, with the most profound conviction of its importance. I am aware of the obstacles which oppose its fulfilment; it is for you to consider, whether they are insurmountable.

CORASMIN to ZINGANI.

I HAVE received and deeply considered your letter, with the important advice which it contains. The subject is serious; it called, even at this moment, for a short interval of reflection. I was strongly prepossessed in favour of your opinion, by its coincidence with that of my revered friend Altuno, who, though in a

manner somewhat less decided, points to this mode of exciting the national zeal. Yet is my situation somewhat delicate; standing as I do, appointed by the Monarch, acting by and for him, and thus the natural guardian of his rights. It behoves me then not rashly to admit measures, by which his prerogative is to be limited. Yet this consideration will not weigh, when a great national benefit concurs with the ultimate advantage of the Monarch himself. In former instances, when such a result was promised by the sacrifice of any of the rights usually exercised by him, I have not hesitated to advise it, and have prevailed. Never, then, was so high a motive presented as now. The Sovereign is not here to derive a mere ultimate advantage from the future greatness of his people; it is his own existence as a King that is at stake. No other mode appears of fixing the crown secure on his head. For, after

searching and recollecting, I certainly find, that the ancient order of Cashmire, and the state of the public mind now, is exactly as you describe it. I have determined, therefore, to bring forward and support, with the whole weight of power and influence which my office gives me, this mode of saving the kingdom. The devotion of their persons, of their all, to this great cause, must be in the people a spontaneous act. The contest which they are to wage must be made quite their own. So essential do I now feel this object, that, did I fail of obtaining it, I should consider myself bound to cease holding the reigns of power. But, from my experience of Vizignan, I entertain sanguine hopes of not being driven to such an alternative. Meantime, Zingani, do you employ the short interval which this crisis allows, in meditating on the form into which this august assembly is to be moulded. The ancient

basis must be adhered to : yet why should we not introduce such new modifications as the improved science of legislation dictates ? such, the expediency of which was demonstrated by former experience, though the barriers of established habit resisted their adoption. Yet remember also, when legislating for men, we must never forget that they are such. Beware of placing in them any false trust ; beware of measuring them by your own standard. Remember, that the human heart, when ambition goads it, knows no longer any bounds to its daring ; that, if its career be left unchecked, there is no guilt into which it may not precipitate itself. Let bulwarks be raised ; let each order check and controul the other ; let the throne be secured in all its ancient rights ; calculate and guard against the evils to which each different arrangement may lead. This is a moment truly and

awfully important; for whatever we do now will afterwards hardly be recalled.

CORASMIN, to ALTUNO.

YOUR suggestion as to the means of saving our country, seconded as it was by whatever was wisest in our councils here, has been eagerly adopted. The obstacles to this great design did not prove altogether so formidable as had at first been anticipated. The Sovereign revolted, indeed, at the first idea of it. He had been bred up in a hereditary dread and distrust of this national council; he had often heard its suppression celebrated as a triumph. Its restoration,

therefore presented to him no flattering ideas. This remedy seemed to be desperate indeed. All these prepossessions were encouraged by a crowd of courtiers and old statesmen, who reminded us of all the contradictions which former Monarchs had endured from these assemblies. "It is vain," say they, "to expect from them any thing but turbulence and confusion. They always thought only of setting the royal authority at defiance. You will soon repent having sought their aid. Has not the King full authority, of himself, to order the whole nation to come forth to defend his territories; and are they not bound to obey? what occasion then can he have to sue to them for aid? Be assured, this is a step which no King ever voluntarily took without afterwards regretting it." I was prepared for such reasonings, and found in them nothing to move the resolution which I had formed. With the King it was other-

wise; yet I soon discovered that his aversion had not taken that deep seat which we had dreaded. It was scarcely necessary, even to urge the imperious necessity of the present crisis, in order to induce his consent. Amid the dislike to the measures which had been instilled into him, I soon saw that there was mingled a secret desire to meet his people, and to receive marks of that love which he was conscious of possessing. Thus I was listened to, when I represented the slender ground on which those fears rested, which were represented as so formidable. It was easy to prove, that if the former proceedings of this assembly, as being those of men, had not always been adjusted to a nice standard of perfection, they had yet differed widely from the representation given of them by the votaries of absolute sway. Repeated provocations had been given, encroachments had been made at every

promising opportunity ; they had been treated as enemies, and, by that treatment, had been rendered such. But when he had made himself the object of the nation's love, and when the force of that sentiment was heightened by the common danger, which threatened him and them alike, nothing but the happiest results could be anticipated from their assembling. It is incredible with what satisfaction the King listened to these arguments ; how soon and how easily the unfavourable impressions were obliterated. I obtained his full consent ; and he now looks forward, with a youthful and generous ardour, to the moment when he is to meet, for the first time, his assembled people.

ALVANDA to CORASMIN.

I HAVE conformed to your wishes, in announcing throughout Cashmire the boon which his Majesty has been pleased to grant. In the progress of the journey which I am now taking through its territory, I have had an opportunity of observing the effect produced by it. The people before were willing to obey, to defend themselves and a King whom they loved; but far different is the spirit which is now kindled. Transported at the renewal of their ancient and revered assembly, they wait not however its decisions: they pour in multitudes, greater even than were commanded or expected,

to the points of destined rendezvous. An host, such as Cashmire never before mustered, will soon follow her standard. The arrangements for disciplining and preparing them for the field, hastily as they were made, have been found adequate. Wherever men are assembled, all the means of training them are amply provided.

I go, with my utmost speed, to execute the commission you have given. You wish, that the last hope of conciliation, though faint, should not be sacrificed by any omission of ours. Our other neighbours, who are ready to bend beneath the storm, are also to be reminded of the interest which calls them to unite with us, and of the hopes which such an alliance would offer. You judge me qualified for this arduous and delicate function. I fulfil it with alacrity: All my powers shall be intensely exerted; and I shall return, I trust, in time to

share the glory and danger of the approaching contest.

CORASMIN to ALTUNO.

THE great event, which the urgent pressure of danger rendered it necessary to precipitate, has now taken place;—the nation has met, after an interval of ages, and their meeting has been productive of the happiest result. They have hastened to place at the disposal of the Sovereign every resource which the country could furnish, to avert the threatened danger. The calls made on them, though of a magnitude so unprecedented, have been answered with acclama-

tion. Their demands, in return, were few, reasonable, and granted at once. They consisted chiefly of security for the permanence of their own meeting; and as to public measures, of perseverance in the things which were done and doing. Mighty, then, is the force which we can now oppose to the invading torrent. The united strength of a great people follows our standard. But this strength is yet formless and rude. There must be judgment, thought, to mould and direct it. We have men and patriot hearts, but we have not an army. It were dismal, if all the efforts, the resources, the sacrifices of this great nation, were to be made in vain, because the means of rendering them effectual were not employed. This demands the exertions of every moment; it leaves no room for any other thought. I anxiously wait the arrival of intelligence from Alvanda, who has undertaken to

make the last efforts to conciliate the enemy, and induce him to relinquish his designs; or, if that fail, to rouse a spirit of resistance among the neighbouring states. No one could be better qualified, by activity and address, for such a mission; yet the difficulties which embarrass it are such, as to render it impossible, with any assurance, to anticipate success.

ALVANDA to CORASMIN.

ALAS! my friend, the first part of my mission is fulfilled, but I have nothing favourable to report. Pacific professions, indeed, were lavished; former im-

perious demands were slightly touched upon ; and an extreme willingness expressed to enter into a negociation, provided it were accompanied with a remission of those preparations which were known to be making in Cashmire. But here every quarter was filled with vast military movements ; and, when the cause was demanded, none that seemed at all possible was assigned. It appeared evident, that deep and mortal resentment had been kindled by this unlooked-for resistance ; and that every pacific semblance was assumed only in the hope of lulling us into fancied security. I now saw that my farther stay would be unavailing ; that if I was to meet any success, it was not here. I left a person of trust to represent the court, to receive any proposition that might be made, and obviate every reflection, as to neglect of the means by which peace might have been preserved ; but I earnestly warn

you against cherishing such hopes. No! war, deadly war, waged with all its collected strength, is alone to be expected. Having thus failed in my first object, I proceeded to the other states. I left no means omitted to impress them with a sense of their true wisdom, and induce them to rally round our standard. But here, too, my success was not such as the cause merited. All seemed panic-struck, and all disposed to prefer even a temporary respite, to a pursuit, through such peril, of ultimate safety. Scarcely a friend is found to rally round the tottering fortunes of Cashmire. The small state of Kilan alone, mindful of the close alliance by which it has so long been united, remains firm to us, and is preparing to join its little band with ours.

I have no other good news to announce, and I am truly mortified at having only such a result to state. I know not whether another could have been

obtained; no one, I think, could have been more zealous. You chose me, and in you I will doubtless find an indulgent judge. But now the time is come, when I may claim the privilege of serving my country in a nobler field; for it is there, in battle, that her fate is to be decided. An opportunity, sure, will then be given me, of offering the last drop of my blood in her defence.

CORASMIN to ALVANDA.

I CERTAINLY could have felt no disposition (even had my confidence in you been much less than it is), to blame you for failure in a pursuit, of which I never

entertained any sanguine hopes. After comparing your statements with the documents by which it is confirmed, I see every ground to be satisfied with the manner in which your commission has been executed. It is enough; we have satisfied ourselves and the world, that nothing which it was possible to do for preserving peace has by us been omitted. It is on another now, a more splendid, but more fatal theatre, that we are to seek our country's deliverance. The ardour with which you demand to be an actor there, is entirely congenial to your character. But do not, my dear friend, be too much mortified, when I tell you, that other views have been formed for you. We must be ready to postpone every thing, even glory itself, to our country's welfare. We have hundreds in our ranks who are qualified either to lead or to follow; hundreds who will set the example of braving

death. Yours is a rarer and higher quality: You know the springs by which cabinets are moved; you can persuade and conciliate those who act the great parts in the drama of the world. There is still scope for the exercise of these functions; and it is by them that you may render yourself truly useful in this great exigency. You have failed with our northern neighbours: this was to be dreaded; but aid may yet be hoped from the states of India. It will be your part now to visit their courts; and, with all the force of eloquence and persuasive powers, to impress upon them how deeply their safety is involved in the success of our arms. Urge them to send aid as great as possible, and above all, as speedy. Be assured, that the motives are urgent which make you be pitched upon for this service: the state requires it; the King enjoins it. You must suppress your private feelings. There is no time for ob-

jection or discussion: You will not, I trust, embarrass us with them, but will enter on the course pointed out, with the same zeal as if it had been the object of your own choice.

ALVANDA to CORASMIN.

I RECEIVED your letter, and perused it, I will frankly own, with sensations very different from those with which yours usually inspire me. I allude to the last part, which all that was agreeable in the beginning was insufficient to qualify. I did not write for one day, otherwise I could scarcely have been able to answer in the manner I wished or ought. A

very short consideration made me do full justice to your motives and views. Yet surely it is a severe lot, that this opinion which you possess of my qualifications, should exclude me from a field of employment to which honour so imperiously calls. Nothing short of a mandate so decisive could have induced me to submit. However, since it is so, I will go; and it shall never, I trust, appear, in my discharge of this function, that it was not the one which, had a choice been given, I would have selected for myself.

ACTEMAD to CORASMIN.

THE crisis is at hand ; the enemy cannot now be long absent. We have, assembled and ready for the field, an army the most formidable that was ever drawn from so narrow a district. One thing seems alone wanting, which cannot have escaped your observation. Who is to command this great armament ? for one commander, I presume, it must have ; not a divided authority. By the preparations which I understand are making, it would appear that the Sovereign proposes to take the field in person. This is natural and suitable ; but does he mean, then, to assume the office of com-

mander? Does he possess the experience requisite for the discharge of so momentous a function? Gasuli is, no doubt, the man of the most profound military skill; but the perversity of his disposition, and his obstinate hostility to our administration, place him out of the question. Upon the whole it appears to me, that as you intend to accompany the army, you yourself, with the memory of what you formerly did, would secure the confidence of the army beyond any other who could be raised to the command. I do not flatter when I declare, that I know of no person whatever who can claim a superiority in military knowledge; and if any difficulty arose, you could command the best advice from every quarter.

CORASMIN to ACTEMAD.

I AM exceedingly pleased to find, that you have been bestowing consideration on a subject, of the vast importance of which I am fully aware. After long consideration I have formed my resolution, and have obtained for it the royal sanction. Vizignan goes to the army, and I accompany him, but both in the same capacity, as spectators only. The Cashmirian army will be animated by the presence of its Monarch; but he is, for the reason you mention, certainly not the man to direct the military movements. He has acquiesced, with some reluctance I own; but that was a point

in which I never could have yielded. For myself, it is doubtless my part to be present and active in so great a danger. I may snatch, I think, opportunities of doing some good; but it is not in the manner which you suggest. Could a single campaign, however spent, have fitted for the discharge of so awful an office? Yet, admitting that were true, which is only dictated by the partiality of friendship, that I really held the second place in military skill, why, at such a moment as this, should we not employ the first? In short, I have resolved; it is Gasuli himself that must lead our armies, and I am to place myself in his train. I will not announce it to him, however, till I hear from you whether there is any insurmountable objection to his being employed. I beg I may hear as soon as possible, for there is little time to lose.

ACTEMAD to CORASMIN.

My surprise, at perusing your letter, abated greatly after a little consideration. No one can doubt the motives which induce you to confer a post so elevated, on one from whom you have met with such a series of causeless personal hostility. But do you really think this is a man to whom such great interests can be prudently entrusted? Muscati, who knows him well, objects to him in the strongest manner. "You may rest assured," says he, "that if Corasmin had seen what I have seen of this man, he never would, for a moment, have

thought of employing him. No government ever did so, without having cause to repent it. Only consider: He never had any cause of complaint whatever against any of those now in office: if he can allege any injury, it was before they had the slightest share in the government. Yet he never makes any distinction: the court, he thinks, injured him, and the court, whoever presides there, is the object of his perpetual enmity. I really do not think it safe to entrust power in such hands. How many persons of distinction are there, besides, who will think themselves better entitled to this place, and will be offended to see so uncouth a commander preferred. Either he will refuse; or he will accept, with the view of thwarting and embarrassing us. Truly I speak not from prejudice, or any personal dislike whatever, that I entertain against the man; but such has been the uniform experience

we have had of him ; and I could not help feeling extremely sorry, that the court should ever again be exposed to such insults as I have seen it endure from him."

CORASMIN *to ACTEMAD.*

I HAVE considered seriously all that you have transmitted to me on the subject of our proposed commander ; but it will not avail. Not that I can approve or justify his proceedings ; but his services are wanted, not for any purpose of ambition or temporary convenience, but for the safety of his country : they must be obtained at any price. He possesses,

besides, such intrinsic merit, that the rust which covers it may well be overlooked. He errs, but they are the errors of a great man ; they will never, in my book, be recorded against him. You dread that he will not accept, or that, accepting, he cannot be trusted. You are mistaken. In his own uncouth manner he loves his country, though not those by whom it is governed : he will not refuse to serve her in this hour of danger. Fear not ; I will manage him, will endure his ill humour, will render him useful to us.

CORASMIN to GASULI.

ALTHOUGH I have never enjoyed that share of your friendship which I wished, and even thought myself half-entitled to, I yet feel no hesitation in applying to you at present. I call upon you to take the command of the army which is assembled to defend Cashmire from subjection, with which she is threatened. You complain, I understand, of having been injured by us. It were easy to prove, that neither myself nor my colleagues have ever felt or manifested for you any thing but the greatest respect. I could do so, but will not now. Cash-

mire has more sacred claims upon you. You owe yourself to your King, and to the nation, in this their great peril. I will not injure you so far as to imagine, that any personal feelings will interfere with this first duty; neither will I make any promises, because I believe they would be superfluous. The army is ready, and you are called to place yourself at its head. I do not think another word can be necessary.

GASULI to CORASMIN.

THERE was no need to inform me of the distress in which you are. Even had I heard nothing from other quarters,

it was abundantly proved by the mere circumstance of my being sent for. I guessed that, when matters came to this extremity, you would find little benefit from your mushroom commanders. You did right not to enlarge on the favours which you seem to imagine I have received from you; and I thank you still more, for not adding any of your court promises. According to all appearance, unless I come forward, the country will be conquered: This is the only consideration that weighs with me. But, there is one thing I must stipulate. A rumour has reached me, that the King, yourself, and your whole court, propose to accompany the army. If so, you must take the whole management; I will have nothing to do with such coadjutors: My authority must be unfettered, or I will accept of none; for this plain reason, that I could be of no use whatever. I would rather fight as a common soldier.

I beg, therefore, before moving a step, to have this point explained ; if it is to my satisfaction, I will set out immediately and take charge of the army.

CORASMIN to GASULI.

My good friend, your answer has been such as became you, and such as I felt assured of receiving. There is one point only, which I must reason a little with you. You insist, that neither the Sovereign, nor any of his ministers, nor courtiers, shall accompany you to the field. I know very well why you make this demand, and what good reasons you have for thinking, that our presence would do

injury. Certainly you shall have your own way in every thing. Yet I must really beg you to consider a little! Would it be becoming or honourable, in such an unprecedented danger, did the Ruler of Cashmire appear to withdraw himself? Is this a situation in which you would wish to place your King? Besides, would not such an appearance of his shrinking from the scene of action, inspire a sensible discouragement into those who are shedding their blood in his cause? It really appears to me essential, that the Monarch, and all who are most nearly attached to his person, should be seen in the foremost ranks, and braving whatever is most formidable in this tempest of war. Now, you may rest assured also, that neither himself, nor any of us, is at present hated by the nation, but very much the contrary: our presence will not at all tend to damp the enthusiasm which already exists in the army. I know well

what you dread. You imagine, that, with such a train accompanying, your command will be merely nominal; that every measure will be controlled and thwarted; that you will endure the disgrace occasioned by the failure of measures not your own. Now I pledge myself, that you shall not have one of these grievances to complain of. We ask permission to follow as mere volunteers: We will not even give advice, unless you choose to ask it. No, General, we come to be spectators of your glory, not to share it. If you find us interfering and doing mischief, you will only have to send us away: a word shall be sufficient. Upon this footing, I hope you will no longer object to our plan, but will proceed without delay to place yourself at the head of the army of Cashmire.

GASULI to CORASMIN.

You judge quite right as to my reasons for not wishing to have you with me; and, though your offers are fair, I dread very much what might be the consequence. Certain it is, that I never yet saw kings and courtiers accompanying an army without great mischief ensuing. If, indeed, you were to keep strictly within the limits you promise, your presence might be of advantage; for I am not ignorant that your government is popular. But how rare is it for those who have the power, when the trial comes, not to use it? Well, since you plead so hard, I will give you a trial;

and as to your promise of departing when required, remember it will not be forgotten; and though I cannot enforce it, I will at least depart myself in the event of its non-fulfilment. In the meantime, let me examine into the state of the magazines and military stores. No doubt, all will have gone to wreck: so it has ever been after an interval of peace. However, it is high time now to think of supplying these deficiencies.

CORASMIN to ACTEMAD.

THE scene now thickens upon us: The approach of the enemy is so near as no longer to admit of delay in joining the

army. I regret being unable to comply with your wish, to form one of the band who are to contend for their country's deliverance. It is natural and honourable that you should feel this wish; but the present moment is one, when all must consider, not to what their own private inclination would impel them, but where their efforts may most benefit their country. While the Sovereign himself, with all who have been trained to military command, depart for the scene of action, there must be one at home to support and second them; one to organize and transmit those supplies and resources, without which war would soon languish. His is a difficult as well as an important part; for, without strict vigilance, the present convulsion may relax and paralyze the springs of internal prosperity. Yet, while we call forth without reserve all the means of averting the danger; while every object is made secondary to

that, we are not to lose sight of the general and permanent resources of national welfare. Now, to accomplish these various objects, you undoubtedly are the man, of all others, best fitted. Remain then at home : thence transmit to us the means of success ; and on us let the burden rest, of rightly employing them. Whatever is done well will then originate with you ; and you may cheerfully renounce the empty glory of setting death at defiance. Meanwhile, our Generalissimo demands to see the state of our preparations and military stores, and he does not seem to proceed in the best humour to the examination. All must be shewn to him without reserve, and, at the same time, without our being offended by whatever observations he may make. I am not sensible that there will be found much room for the very hard judgment which he seems prepared to form. At the same time, his experience

may certainly enable him to point out deficiencies which have escaped ourselves. In that case, we must promptly avail ourselves of whatever information he may give, without paying any regard to the ungracious manner in which it may be communicated.

GASULI to ACTEMAD.

I BEGIN to think that there is really some improvement in the management of this administration. I expected that, as usual, all would have been to be done, every thing neglected and going to ruin; because, during an interval of peace, the necessity of attending to these matters

had been less urgent. The case proves to be quite otherwise;—every thing is in the very state in which it would have been after years of preparation. This is some encouragement to proceed: We may hope that our undertakings will not fail, as formerly, from the want of the most obvious requisites of success. Your minister is different, as yet, from any that I have hitherto dealt with. Formerly, I used to solicit and solicit again, and never find myself nearer my object; now, all is provided before it is asked. There has been as yet no delay or neglect, and if he proceeds in the same course, I think we may do together very well.

SELMIDA to HINDALI.

I know that, by the letter which I am now to write, I shall expose myself to your ridicule, and to all the wicked surmises which you take such delight in framing. However, the subject is of such importance, I mean in a national point of view, that I cannot think myself justified, or feel at ease, while there appears any thing that I can do, in not doing it. You know as well as myself, that Corasmin is on the point of setting off for the field. I need not conceal the interest I take in his fortune, and that of the army which combats under his auspices. My most ardent wishes attend for him and

for mankind, in whose cause he draws the unwilling sword. But the point on which I feel anxiety is this. Recollecting his former exploits, contemplating his character, and the object for which he contends, can we expect that he will value his own life as it deserves to be valued? Is it not likely, that he will stake it, wherever, at the moment, a great benefit seems likely to be gained? But how very few are the objects which could compensate to Cashmire for such a loss? and where would she be, when deprived of him who forms the main prop of her prosperity? You know well Zingani who accompanies him; your husband knows him also, much better than I do, and can speak much more freely: to him you could represent the greatness of the danger; you could urge the necessity of some warning friend to check that too impetuous valour. Do you not owe it to your country, to omit no means

of preserving one who has been so much her benefactor? I believe I need say no more; and I appeal to you, whether patriotic motives, though there had not been even friendship, might not be sufficient to prompt all that I have now said? But I am interrupted.—

OH! my friend, what a critical interview!—He has been here in haste, to take leave, before departing for the army. To render my trial more severe, my father and mother were accidentally absent, and I received him alone. His address, without being more presuming than usual, was peculiarly tender, and with heroic ardour was mingled a secret feeling of whither he was going, and what might be his fate. I felt it, and could not resist the impression, and my heart was divested of all its pride. Ima-

gine not, however, that I committed myself beyond recall. But could I be blamed if the look was eager, that was perhaps to be the last? if a too tender farewell burst from me? He asked a token of friendship only; and was it possible for me to refuse? My wishes for success and safety to him were warm indeed; but who is there that belongs to Cashmire, who would not have joined in them? Yet, should he return still fond and faithful! I fear,—I know not,—my thoughts, yet wavering and agitated, can fix upon nothing. But, in the meantime, anxiety must be extreme till we see the issue. I must again, and without reserve, press upon you the subject with which I began. You have the best means of obtaining early information: You need not then studiously withhold it from me. I say no more.

ZINGANI to ACTEMAD.

I SHALL now, agreeably to the arrangements we have made, open my correspondence with you on the subject of the campaign in which we are about to engage. The armies are in the field, and those operations are about to begin, of which the influence is to be so mighty on the fate of Cashmire, and of the world. As yet, to the astonishment of all, the most perfect harmony has reigned in our councils. All are amazed at the manner in which Corasmin sooths the ill humour of our commander-in-chief, and prevents him from bursting into his usual fits of waywardness and

caprice. For the sake of his country he endures every thing ; never allows himself to be discomposed : He forms thus a conciliatory medium between him and the other generals, whom his ruggedness was wont to revolt. Although this old man be certainly the first we have in regard to experience of war, and the technical part of military operations, there remain still many points in which he has important advice to receive from Corasmin. To view every object with an enlarged reference to its ultimate consequences, and to the attainment of the object for which arms were assumed ; to consider, not merely the circumstances immediately before him, but also the present condition and future prospects of Cashmire, and of all the kingdoms with which it is connected ; to weigh, in short, all the policy of war ;—these are considerations which he never was accustomed to revolve, and is therefore very ill qualified

to decide. They were less necessary at the period when war was conducted on a smaller scale, and after an established system; but here, where all the hopes and interests of Cashmire, and of the eastern world, are at once embarked, every measure, even the smallest, must be considered, not in itself, but in its relation to these mighty concerns. The mind of Gasuli is incapable of such a range; but his sound strong sense enables him to understand these principles, when laid down in a plain homely language, suited to his humour, and which Corasmin knows how to use. He is always, indeed, more or less fretted at being turned, even by the plainest reasons, out of the course in which he was originally proceeding; but as he never meets with any irritation, his composure gradually returns. Thus harmony and concert are preserved, in circumstances where they seemed almost hopeless.

I shall continue to communicate with you on the affairs of the campaign, and shall soon, according to all appearance, have very important events to announce. The enemy have laid siege to a fortress which forms one of the grand keys of the kingdom. Corasmin, who knew its value, had, long before the present crisis, directed his attention to improve and strengthen it. We trust that its defence will be vigorous. The supplies have hitherto been regularly forwarded, and the army has wanted nothing. You will see, by the papers herewith transmitted, all that will now be required; and I place implicit reliance on your diligence, in causing that no deficiency be felt.

From the Same to the Same.

I WAS not deceived in my expectation of having important events to communicate ; yet are they not, outwardly at least, quite so decisive as you might have anticipated. The place besieged being fully supplied with whatever could secure a vigorous resistance, did not disappoint our hopes. The defence was of long duration : the enemy's ranks were thinned of many of their best troops ; and they were weakened, moreover, by the diligent use of all the means of annoyance which our situation afforded. But the period at length arrived, when a longer defence could not be expected, and mul-

tiplied signals of distress announced approaching surrender. Gasuli began then, according to military rule, to put his troops in motion, in order to give battle for its relief. Corasmin, who was all attention to his movements, inquired, and soon learned that such was his purpose. "But, my friend," said he, "do you think us assured of victory? has nothing been left to chance?" "Nay, very far be it from me to say so; it will be a very hard victory if we gain one at all. The issue is certainly doubtful; the strength of the enemy is too immense to render it otherwise. But still there is a great object to contend for, and the inequality is not very great: I will do my utmost, and victory may follow." "But, my friend, does it not appear to you, that this is a moment which calls for the deepest consideration. Nothing, if possible, must be left within the power of fortune. If we fail now, Cashmire is

all but utterly lost. We have still other fortresses, behind which a stand may be made ; and consider, how many are the advantages which we should reap from delay. These troops, who, in such numbers, have recently joined our ranks, could they be safely committed against the veterans of Bukaria ? Is not time necessary for training them to war ? Our Indian auxiliaries, too, whatever may be their numbers, and my accounts are favourable, may thus be enabled to reach us in time. Every day which elapses will add to our strength, and reduce that of our adversary." " There is abundance of good sense in what you say ; but it will be in vain that you attempt to carry it into execution. All our young giddy heads will unite to raise a clamour, which will soon make you repent having ever proposed it." Corasmin instantly replied : " My friend, these are motives which must not for a moment sway us. The old and illustrious

King authorizes, commands you to follow in every thing the dictates of your own judgment; and to disregard clamours, which it will rest with him to suppress. The question is not, what persons may think, or what they may say; but how Cashmire may be saved?" "Well, if you promise to support me, I shall most willingly make the experiment; but rest assured, you will find it a more difficult task than you at present imagine." "That is indifferent to me; I will support you."

Thus the system was fixed, and we beheld, without moving, the painful spectacle of the fall of this fortress. Surprise and murmurs were excited; nevertheless, reason was listened to: The motives by which this system was prompted, were sufficiently obvious; they were strengthened by the whole weight of royal and ministerial authority: discontent was thus prevented from rising to any serious height; and Gasuli was able

to execute his design without any material impediment. One distressing result, however, was in the first instance not to be avoided. A considerable extent of Cashmirian territory, which the fortress had covered, was unavoidably left exposed to hostile inroad. The inhabitants of the tract thus abandoned, complained, with seeming justice, that the protection due to all was denied to them. The suffering thus created, though it never hid from Corasmin the high motives which urged to this measure, was felt by him with exquisite sensibility. The Sovereign himself eagerly concurred in every exertion which could sooth the ills of his afflicted people. Arrangements were previously provided, by which shelter was afforded to the train of helpless fugitives; and every mitigation secured, of which so great evils could admit. Anxious care was taken to convince the people, that this apparent desertion arose

from no absence of zeal for their safety and interests. A proclamation was issued, in which the motives of it were explained; how an afflicting necessity compelled us for a moment to withdraw our protection. His Majesty felt for their sufferings as if for his own; but upon this measure depended the safety of all, which could not be sacrificed even to the most urgent interests of any one part. The people, convinced by experience, that it could be by no voluntary desertion of their rulers that they suffered these ills, were satisfied, obeyed the injunctions, and left to the enemy only a desert to traverse. The second bulwark of Cashmire is now approached: The defence at present promises well; but what will be the final issue, time only can disclose.

From the Same to the Same.

THE new fortress made a resistance, little inferior to that of which the example had already been set; but the time, as was inevitable, arrived, when its farther prolongation could no longer be expected. Then a new deliberation arose, whether battle was to be given; and the result was expected by the army with very eager interest. On a comparison of motives, the balance of advantage still inclined greatly on the side of delay; yet scarcely was there one in the council who could venture to advise it. But Corasmin insisted, that no object should be allowed to come under delibe-

ration, except the ultimate success of the common cause. He cheerfully undertook to brave in person all the odium which might be incurred. Gasoli, sensible that the arguments were sound by which this plan was supported, adopted it, though not without a secret discontent, instead of one which had been originally his own, and which he had still a lingering propensity to follow. The fulfilment, too, of his former predictions, began now fully to appear. As soon as, by the movements of the army, it became evident that this fortress, like the other, was to be suffered to fall, the murmurs became loud and universal. Never, it was said, did such a disgrace overtake this country ; thus to see all her bulwarks fall, as if there were not an army to defend them. Why not submit at once ? Was not the army equally, nay, more numerous, than that which is opposed to it ? Hundreds of upstart officers began

to declare, that, were it entrusted to them, the enemy should not remain two days within the Cashmirian frontier. The King himself was not altogether exempted from the influence. Full of youthful ardour and hope, eagerly alive to the glory of his arms, he could little brook a system thus apparently timid and passive. He had fully concurred, indeed, in the views of Corasmin ; had felt all the force of his arguments ; he felt them still, when they were forcibly urged ; yet afterwards, when he heard the other side zealously supported ; when the whole camp seemed, as it were, to unite in an opposite opinion, inclination weighed powerfully, and all his resolutions began to waver. One day, when he had been strongly acted upon by these impressions, he met the old general, and could not forbear expressing a certain degree of impatience, and almost irritation, at the inactive

state in which he kept his troops. Ga-suli was ill fitted to endure such treatment ; he immediately ran to Corasmin, and made a full display of his grievances. “ You see it is as I predicted : men, officers, all are murmuring ; and those most loudly who could least be trusted in the hour of action. The King himself goes to their side, and begins to taunt me. It is impossible for me to stem the torrent. Now is the time to interpose, if you intend ever to do so : but I suppose I shall be sacrificed as usual. I see more and more, how foolish it was in me to undertake this command. Would that I could find, even now, some mode of honourably retiring from it.” “ My good friend, allow me only to ask you one question : Shall we not be stronger, relatively to the enemy, two months hence, than now ? and will not success, which is at present probable only, be then nearly certain ? ” “ This I do not deny ; I see

it clearly: But how are we to get on till that time?" " Throw the measure, if you so incline, entirely upon me: I accept the whole burden and odium of it. I will cheerfully, in supporting it, expend and lose my whole favour with the King, and with the army." " Then, indeed, if you stand thus firm, we may carry through our design. Since I am to be supported, I will bear my part; but certainly also you must take yours."

It was thus determined to adhere to the system of caution; and Corasmin fearlessly encountered all the obstacles which rendered the adherence to it so difficult. He saw clearly, that the mind of the Sovereign was the most dangerous point, and required continual attention. Care was to be taken, that the motives which influenced our conduct should be placed continually in the clearest and strongest light: It was even necessary, that those who might most sway his

mind in an opposite direction, should, by some arrangements, be removed to a distance. Soon arrived intelligence of the fortress having fallen ; and, though this created a strong sensation at the first moment, it has been followed by an interval of repose. There is no longer any motive urging to immediate action : the new fortress, upon which the enemy are advancing, will for some time arrest their farther progress. Men's minds, more cool, open somewhat to the motives and advantages of the delay ; and till the place now besieged shall be in serious danger, no renewal of the late effervescence is to be dreaded.

From the Same to the Same.

ALL are now compelled to acknowledge the important use which has been derived from this interval of inaction. The levies, who, in the opening of the campaign, left their peaceful abodes, and took the field for the first time, can no longer be distinguished from veterans. What was then a vast tumultuary mass, is now a grand and disciplined army. Meanwhile, the Indian auxiliaries, successfully solicited by Alvanda, have arrived, and form a powerful addition to the force already accumulated. All is now hope and confidence; and we hold ourselves almost assured, that soon a

splendid triumph will crown the period of danger and trial. The army waits patiently, and murmurs no longer.

From the Same to the Same.

Soon after last writing you a signal of distress was made by the fortress. The event called for a prompt consideration of the plan which was to be acted upon. Gasuli, now conscious of the superiority of Corasmii in his views of military policy, demanded his opinion. His answer was decided: "I see," said he, "no motive for longer delay. All our armies are in the field, and all full of animation and valour. I am well informed, too, that

reinforcements are preparing, the arrival of which might render the enemy again superior. Now is the time to act: let us strike the blow; I account victory sure." Gasuli at once replied: "I approve; I will fight." The signal to advance was given; it was obeyed with rapture; and soon the whole host was in motion. The expected combat, however, did not take place. The enemy, on our approach, felt their inferiority, precipitately raised the siege, and began a hasty retreat. A shout of triumph ran through the army, when, for the first time, the hostile ensigns were seen receding. Our commanders are determined to push their advantage with vigour, and immediately, if possible, to bring on an action. This design, seconded by the wishes of the whole army, is apparently practicable; and I may probably in my next have to announce to you its result.

From the Same to the Same.

I MENTIONED in my last, that the enemy had begun their retreat. After pursuing it for some time, they stopped and encamped. Our army pressed forward with eager exultation, anticipating a rapid and certain triumph. But when, arrived on the ground, we had an opportunity of observing the position which they had chosen, our hopes sustained a cruel reverse. A camp, formed as it were by nature, had been so strengthened by all the resources of art, as to leave us almost without a chance of subduing it. A long ridge, on which it was established, presented in front, and on

one side, a precipice nearly inaccessible, and from which we were separated by a deep ravine ; while, on the other, it rose into a lofty mountain, that formed, as it were, the citadel of this fortress. Gasuli went round, and surveyed it on every side : He found not a single assailable point. "We cannot," said he, "give battle ; it is against all military rule : the front is impregnable. We may throw parties into their rear ; we may cut off their supplies ; we may, in time, dislodge them ; but nothing can be done against such a front as is now presented." These words struck Corasmin with almost mortal despair. "No," said he, "if we attack them not now, it is vain to anticipate any success. A slow and dilatory warfare can no longer avail. Vast reinforcements, as I am well assured, are already on their march to join the hostile army ; and when these arrive, we can have no hope but of war prolonged

to an indefinite duration." The truth of this observation could not be denied; yet no one was able to propose a scheme for averting the evil, and the meeting broke up without any final resolution. The two following days were spent by Corasmin in silent and dreadful meditation. He felt, that now was the moment, by one victory, to save Cashmire from devastation, and the world from slavery. He sought round on all sides; he examined; all the resources of his mind were strained to effect this object, in defiance even of nature and fate. At length he requested that a council of war should be summoned. On its being met, he said: "I wish to attack. It appears to me that there is some hope of succeeding; and if there be, we shall not act rashly in putting our fortunes to hazard. Victorious, all is ours; vanquished, we merely fail of our object, and are not worse than before: the enemy cannot

follow." All saw the depth of the reflection upon which this system was founded; by yet whence the hope of overcoming barriers so formidable? The question was asked, on what point he judged it assailable? "That mountain," said he, "on the right, which commands their whole line, where they think themselves most of all secure, it is there I judge there is room for attack." All were stunned; even Gasuli, accustomed to the boldest enterprises, stood aghast at this. "Truly, Corasmin, you seem now to lose sight entirely of prudence; what you propose is, in my apprehension, plainly impossible." "No," said he, "I have observed that this point, from the very confidence inspired by its strength, is less carefully guarded. I have seen a narrow track leading even to the summit, in which there is nothing to arrest such men as I can lead through it." "I recollect now to what you allude. Yes, certainly the

thing is possible; but it is not regular, it is not military: I could not stake my reputation upon it; the risk is dreadful. If you venture on the enterprise, you must make it entirely your own." "Most willingly; give me only the men whom I want." "I will; who are they?" "They are those who were shut up with me in _____; the chosen band, who have sworn to follow me through life and death." "Then take them; and I will say that you are a brave fellow, and deserve to succeed. I will not take a share in an enterprise so much out of rule; but what I can do shall not be omitted. If you penetrate, I instantly follow." Corrasmin was satisfied, and the council immediately broke up. Feeling that all our hopes rested now on celerity, he fixed the approaching night as the moment of action. The ancient companions of his danger obeyed with enthusiasm the call now made upon them, and, when some

addition was necessary, volunteers offered in crowds: But, when myself and several others sought, and even claimed as a right, that we should be associated in the enterprise, he not only objected, but imposed his absolute command, that we should not. He declared his own presence alone necessary; and was unwilling that Cashmire should incur the danger of losing more from among those who presided over her councils. Vain precaution! for, if he fell, what could compensate such a loss? who, like him, could move in harmony that vast machine? who could give the same commanding impulse to every part? That fabric of prosperity, which had for years been erecting, the main pillar withdrawn, would have crumbled into dust. What a moment for Cashmire, when her fate and his became one; how fearful an interval of suspense! But time rapidly rolled on, and brought the moment of fate.

Gasuli acted well his part. A feigned attack was made in another quarter, with such pomp of preparation, and such a display of vigour, as attracted the attention of the enemy almost exclusively. As soon as night, however, threw a veil over our movements, the flower of the army was rapidly conveyed to the spot which was to be the scene of the grand achievement. All the plan had been concerted; the orders given, every chance foreseen. In celerity was to be their main hope. In a moment, then, Corasmin, with his chosen heroes, rushed forth to immortal glory or death. A furious tempest which shook the air, at once favoured the enterprise, and rendered it more awful. We stood breathless and immovable, straining every sense to catch some trace of what was doing: but night interposed her veil; the tempest only was seen driving through the air; and no sounds were heard, but those caused by the con-

vulsion of nature. After an interval, however, a loud voice of triumph was heard mingling, and, by a flash of lightning, the standard of Cashmire was seen waving on the steeps above. An universal shout of triumph replied. Gasuli gave the signal, and the army, as if frantic, poured itself into the ravine, and rushed up the side of the mountain. Corasmin had gained its loftiest pinnacles; but his little band hardly maintained itself, against efforts which the enemy, with collected strength, were making to regain it. Its numbers, however, were soon augmented; aid followed aid in rapid succession: Soon the mountain was completely secured; and soon we were able thence to pour down upon the camp, of which it had been the guard. Amazement struck the whole host, to see their loftiest bulwark scaled, and an enemy descending in terror from that station to which they had looked for their firmest

security. Night and the tempest augmented their dismay. Without a rallying point, they fell into irretrievable confusion; the panic became universal; and soon the whole army, abandoning camp, arms, equipage, precipitately fled. As day broke there was no longer a Bokarian army; there were merely scattered assemblages of men, flying they knew not whither. The prisoners and booty were immense, and those of their chiefs who did not fall into our hands, fled far from the scene of action. The pursuit is still unremitted.

The triumph of Cashmire is thus complete; and, in the just defence of her rights, she has risen to a high pre-eminence of glory and military greatness. Nor can any one doubt to whose councils and valour she is indebted for so splendid an era. Gasuli himself, forgetting all his prejudices, loudly called upon him to assume the chief command. "I am clear-

ly surpassed ; you have done what I could not ; you are evidently the better general : take your place." And he said this without envy or discontent, but with the warmth of one who appreciates congenial merit. The common voice of the army called to the supreme command, him who had so often led them to victory. But Corasmin was not intoxicated, even by glory so splendid. Cautiously weighing the limits of his experience and resources, he yielded not to the call of public admiration. "No," said he ; "in a moment of extremity I have made a daring effort, and have succeeded. Heaven has granted me this privilege, to be an instrument in saving my country. But I have no discipline, which could prepare me to regulate the movements of a great army, like one whose life has been spent in camps. Resume, my friend, the place which you

allowed me for a moment to occupy." Gasuli had been sincere in making the offer; yet he delighted too much in military command, and felt too high a sense of his own qualifications, to find much difficulty in admitting what was thus unexpectedly urged upon him.

From the Same to the Same.

WE remain still victorious, and masters of the field. The enemy, after so complete an overthrow, has been unable to rally; nor have the reinforcements received, though considerable, at all enabled him to make head against us. The calamity of war has, by a just retribu-

tion, been carried into his own territory; the subjugation with which he threatened us, now impends over himself. A great extent of the hostile territory, unprovided for defence, because never dreading attack, has been covered by our armies. But to the eye of Corasmin this spectacle suggested other images than those of triumph. He beheld the same desolation which had accompanied the Bukarian army, now inflicted by ours. He had declined the command; yet he could not, when we next met in council, forbear an animated expostulation. "War," said he, "must be; the sword must be drawn, to defend our homes, our kindred, and all that heaven has destined us to cherish. The sword must be drawn, and blood must flow; and this action so revolting to humanity, the injustice of man renders it a high duty.—But why these smoking villages? Why these plains covered with crowds

of undone beings, who fly unresisting? Why war against them?" Gasuli, though an unlettered soldier, did not want humanity; any cruelty which went beyond the received system, was observed, and punished by him; but he was not willingly diverted from the course in which he had been trained, and had invariably been accustomed to follow. "Indeed," said he, "I do not see how we are called upon to depart from the practice usual in such circumstances. The enemy assuredly have not done so for us: Their conduct, on the contrary, has been such, as no laws of war, that I ever heard of, could justify. We certainly then have a full right to retaliate; and they have no title to complain, should we even carry it much farther than we do." "No, my friend, this is not the principle on which we are to act. War, in itself so great an evil, must be divested of every superfluous horror. It becomes this great and

triumphant army to set first the glorious example." "Well, I am unwilling now to refuse you any thing. If you will draw up the regulations which you wish to be observed, and will use all your influence in enforcing them, they shall meet with no obstruction on my part. Remember, however, that I do not mean to make myself responsible for the consequences. If any mischief ensues, it must not be imputed to me; for the measure is not mine." Corasmin hesitated not in acceding to this convention; and we soon formed a series of regulations, by which the inhabitants were protected from outrage, and from every privation which was not requisite for procuring necessary supplies to the troops. Soon it became impossible for them, by any experience of suffering, to distinguish this invading force from a native and friendly army, which was passing through for their protection.

Gasuli, who beheld these arrangements with jealous observation, was forced to confess, that none of the predicted evils had followed. On the contrary, the movement of the army was greatly facilitated, when the terror and flight of the native inhabitants no longer preceded it. Provisions, regularly paid, were furnished in abundance ; and the march experienced no further obstruction, than if it had been still within the limits of Cashmire.

From the Same to the Same.

THE enemy in vain endeavoured to re-assemble the wrecks of their scattered

army. Our forces pressed behind closely and rapidly, overtook many of their flying detachments, and kept the others still separated and dispersed. Our victorious legions at length approached the capital, without any force having been collected which seemed adequate to its defence. The enemy, seeing no safety but in peace, sent to demand it. Corasmin was not long in forming his resolution. Never, in the moment of success, did he rush with such ardour to victory, as now to terminate human suffering by the sacrifice of every ambitious hope. In vain did a crowd of courtiers urge, that this was the time to improve our advantage; that fortune, which had so openly declared in our favour, might carry us beyond our most sanguine hopes; that Vizignan might become a mighty conqueror, and might extend his empire over northern Asia. These brilliant chimeras were not without their power over

the mind of Vizignan. The enjoyments of silent legislative beneficence for a moment appeared faint, when compared with the dazzling glory of conquest. But Corasmin, whose hopes and wishes were all centered elsewhere, suffered not the illusion to prevail for a moment. He began by shewing on how narrow a basis these sanguine expectations rested. He proved how ample were still the resources of the enemy, which, though now disorganized, would soon be again called forth; how much it had cost ourselves to make this great effort for national deliverance; and how ruinous would be any attempt at its prolongation. But, allowing that all corresponded to the sanguine expectations now indulged, was there any thing in the prospect presented, of which a wise and truly great monarch could be ambitious? "What consequences will follow? All nations, all mankind will become our

enemies; we will have opened an eternal source of war after war: they will call forth their remaining strength in never-ceasing efforts to regain what they have lost. Vainly should we hope, by extending our empire, to extend the blessings of a protecting administration. No; these efforts after enlarged dominion, could be supported only by draining all the sources of national prosperity; by desolating the conquering nation and the conquered alike. How cruel, how guilty a triumph; how ill exchanged for that which your Majesty has hitherto enjoyed from the growing happiness of a grateful people! For the welfare of how many mortals are we already responsible before the tribunal above! Could we dare, by such means, to increase the burden? No; an awful lesson has been given to those who may form future designs against us: the opinion thus inspired will form a bulwark

of security. With this, and with the glory already gained, let us rest satisfied. Something is indeed to be done, that the enemy may repent of his unjust aggression, and may not hope that such can be repeated with impunity. There is a district, which nature has almost destined to form a part of Cashmire, and the possession of which will add to its external security. The inhabitants, too, have nothing in their language and manners so dissimilar, that, with prudent management, they may not speedily coalesce. I think we may demand this territory as the price of peace; and the enemy will consider it as cheaply purchased. There are then stipulations which we may now have an opportunity to obtain, not for our own sole advantage, but affecting the general welfare of humanity. Full freedom, within our own territories, has already been given to the communications of industry.

We may now break those chains which fettered the intercourse between nation and nation; which represented, as a hostile act, the introduction of any rival commodity; and which exposed to continual violence and extortion, the men who exchanged between distant regions the bounties of nature. We can urge the establishment of a full and free transference between our respective territories, of all the productions of nature and art; can secure, by new sanctions, the persons and property of the merchant; can concert new means of favouring mutual intercourse. We will not demand a privilege which we will not offer to its full extent in return. The prosperity of our neighbours will thus be provided for, as well as our own; and new sources of wealth be opened to all the kingdoms of Asia." Vizignan, whom the glory of conquest had for a moment dazzled, and who, without a warning voice, might

have been seduced into that path, was soon inspired anew with the sentiments which had so long animated him. "Yes," said he, "I recognize it now: it is not in conquest that a king can find his genuine glory. I will grant peace to my enemy when he asks it, even though necessity alone compels him. Never shall the world, through me, be desolated by any war which is not dictated by high necessity." The negociation was soon concluded; since the enemy, who were prepared for the necessity of yielding more, accepted promptly the conditions offered, and peace was quickly concluded.

CORASMIN to ALTUNO.

I CAN now, at leisure, resume our correspondence. I receive with true pleasure your congratulations on the issue of this campaign. Every effort, every sacrifice of mine was imperiously due to the cause contended for. Success has exceeded my hopes. All our plans of internal improvement may now be pursued at full leisure, uninterrupted by the dread of foreign interference. Meanwhile, a new field of usefulness is opened, through the ascendancy acquired by the arms of Cashmire. The influence thus secured over the councils of the surrounding states, may, if well directed, be made to

contribute to the repose of mankind. So great a weight, if invariably thrown into the scale of justice, may have a mighty influence to check the career of ambition, and to suspend those tragical scenes which its tumultuous workings cause to be repeated without ceasing. Our influence may now be employed to diffuse a system which may be beneficial to all; to remove those bars of distrust which produce such entire separation; to promote arrangements for communicating to all, those blessings which heaven has bestowed on each. Doubtless the weight of responsibility that rests upon us is thus augmented; but a high duty imposes it, and we will not shrink.

From the Same to the Same.

AN interesting object has just occupied our attention. The period having arrived for a new assemblage of the national council, I proposed to Vizignan that this measure should take place. I found him entirely disposed to concur in this proposal. No sooner, however, had such an intention transpired, than an outcry was raised by the whole band of courtiers and old official men. "The thing certainly was useful at the moment; indeed there was then a kind of necessity for it: to this it was proper that all other considerations should yield. But now their purpose is fully served;

there is no farther use that can be made of them; nothing but vexation and embarrassment can be the result of calling them together. Extraordinary circumstances obliged us for the moment to endure the evil; but it were foolish indeed thus wantonly to perpetuate it. As for any vague promise they may have extorted, that ought not to be allowed to have the smallest weight in the deliberation. It has always been the maxim of this court, to pay no regard whatever to any such circumstance. It was sufficiently ungenerous in them to take this advantage of our necessity. But they will gain nothing by it: no king who understands the true principles of policy would suffer himself to be bound by such fetters."

Vizignan was shaken; he asked my opinion as to these warnings which were given him, and whether I thought this really an adviseable measure? "Sire," said I, "there is one principle which I

am confident I need only name, in order to fix your resolution. Your honour is pledged,—the sacred word of a monarch; and vain is the sophistry by which its obligation is sought to be subverted. Compulsion is urged; but of what nature? resting solely upon the advantages which were to be the result of the assurance given. Thus a mutual obligation was incurred, and on their part amply fulfilled; why not also on ours? But, Sire, on the ground of policy alone, I am ready to meet every argument that can be offered. I speak not of the discontent, mortal though it must be, which would be kindled by such a disappointment of their just expectations. I speak not of the dangers to which this natural indignation may give rise. But, Sire, you have met your people, and have received from them only testimonies of duty and attachment. You have experienced that this assembly may be held, without any

result either painful or alarming. Allow me, then, to recal to you the experience of ages, which proves, that no government, in which the people have no share, can ever be permanently great or flourishing. You will transmit to your posterity a much nobler sceptre, by transmitting it free, than if all national rights were trampled beneath your feet. For a portion of present seeming power, you would relinquish splendid hopes for yourself and your race." The King, who had received merely a momentary impression, soon reverted to sentiments more congenial to his disposition. " You say well, Corasmin," exclaimed he ; " your first argument is alone sufficient. My royal word is given ; it shall not be forfeited. There is no need to reason any further : I should be sorry to disappoint hopes which my people are so well entitled to form. Let them reap the fruits of their fidelity and devotion. They have shewn

themselves worthy of my confidence, and it shall not be withdrawn from them."

Thus the difficulty was removed, and we now hope that the meeting of this national council will become a fundamental law of the empire.

CORASMIN to ALVANDA.

YOUR talents, which have often been called forth on critical exigencies, are now wanted for an object of peculiar importance. I destine you to preside over the territory which has been recently ceded to us. The choice has been dictated by the most anxious concern

for the welfare of those over whom you are to rule. Your address, your powers of conciliation, even that gaiety which secures the general good-will, render you peculiarly fitted for such a station. You have a painful, delicate office to fill. This people is new to our yoke; they have been accustomed to view us as strangers, as enemies. They cannot, ought not, to love us as yet: the thirst of independence, the hatred of a foreign yoke, proud and honourable sentiments, which we cannot blame, imperiously forbid it. We must expect to encounter symptoms of their enmity. Mercy must still be our remedy. The offence must be repressed, yet the offender spared. The ebullitions of discontent, even of resistance, must be treated as evils, not as crimes. It must never be forgotten, that allegiance, so recently due, cannot be willingly paid. Indulgence, then, must be carried to its utmost limit: No

experience must prove, that it is a foreign yoke under which they are pressed. To do all this, is, I acknowledge, not a common or easy task. Authority is to be maintained without terror over an unwilling people. But while I see all the difficulties of your allotted part, I must congratulate you on the high reward which will attend its fulfilment. Not only will your skilful management have obviated the suffering and confusion, to which every territory is liable from a change of masters; not only will the way be paved for gradually assimilating them with the rest of the nation, and rendering them voluntary and useful subjects: There exists in this district, hitherto uncultivated and ill governed, capacities of improvement, which you will have an opportunity of unfolding. A grand theatre there exists for the exercise of legislative beneficence. These wilds are to be covered with cultivation,

and harvests made to wave on them. Examples must be set, activity awakened, the slumbering genius of industry called into action. Funds will be provided: have no apprehension on that head. Extreme, indeed, would be our necessity, could none be spared for uses so important. I hold your lot truly to be envied. Your territory, like a rich soil that has never felt the hand of the cultivators, will yield an hundred-fold. Here we have, as it were, a machine in action, and which goes almost spontaneously; yours must be dragged forth, and movement impressed upon it. Every thing that is done will have been done by you. Cheerfully, then, I assure myself, will you embrace an employment, which presents the widest field now open in Cashmire for the exercise of public beneficence; and you will account yourself privileged, in having sacrifices to

make, and obstacles to encounter, in such a cause.

SELMIDA to HINDALI.

You ask me, how I now intend to receive Corasmin? and you ask it so, as if you imagined that there were no longer a doubt. He comes, I own, with new claims of admiration: he comes, the saviour of his country, the idol of an admiring world. But how much are you deceived as to the sentiments inspired in me by this triumphal return! I will own, that his idea has not for some time found me quite so tranquil as formerly. While there impended a danger, that one

moment might lose him to myself, and to mankind, it was impossible to think of him without involuntary tenderness. The trembling which seized me on hearing that tidings had arrived from the army; the anxiety till I knew all; the inexpressible relief on learning that all was safe; these made me indeed fear, that I was animated by more than patriot zeal. Now the danger is over; my palpitating heart is at rest. My doubts, my scruples return: Still it is my pride to be his friend, his chosen friend; but still I shrink from being more. This new lustre which surrounds him in the eyes of the world, adds nothing to his value in mine; because there was nothing great which I did not securely anticipate from him. But by raising him higher, it places a greater distance between us. It renders the offered eminence more dazzling, less enviable still. He has never hitherto appeared to presume upon his place

or rank ; never to consider it as following of course, that I must accept the moment he cast his eyes upon me : This modesty, as if he had been the lover least assured of success, tended, above all other things, to sap my determination. But can he retain it now ? can he fail, after this, to expect that I must prove a sure and easy prize ? Is it in short possible, that he should not cherish sentiments that I could not brook ? Thus there appears less reason almost than ever, for departing from my original purpose.

From the Same to the Same.

SINCE you insist upon hearing again, I must write. Corasmin has been here: I have seen him, not, I confess, without some emotion, covered with his new triumphs. I have not any complaint to make. He returns as before, fond and faithful; and in regard to self-estimation, I do not discover a shade of difference. A mere formal compliment even, which I had begun, was received in such a manner as rendered it impossible to finish it. No new barriers have been raised by himself; yet those which relative circumstances have placed between us still subsist, and very warm esteem is still all

of which I am conscious. I regard him as the bulwark of Cashmire, the author of her felicity. I dread beyond every thing to lose him ; but does it follow, that my heart is his ? I venture, not absolutely to pledge myself ; yet certainly I should have hard struggles ere I should consent.

ACTEMAD *to CORASMIN.*

THE intelligence which I am now compelled to lay before you, is of a nature somewhat ungrateful. The arrangements made by the last treaty, with a view to the general prosperity, have been productive of effects that were not per-

haps fully foreseen. Stipulations were obtained, by which the productions of Cashmire were freely received into the neighbouring states, and a reciprocal permission was granted in return. This was all done with the best views; but the immediate consequence has been, such an influx of foreign commodities, as threatens ruin to many of our most flourishing manufactures. The outcry is loud and general, and the evil is viewed, not as the result of any inevitable necessity, but the voluntary act of the Government; the issue of a triumphant war, from which far different results might have been expected. I am aware of the spring which commerce derives from freedom; but may not this principle have been here carried somewhat too far? At all events, I have thought it my duty to collect and lay before you all the information which can assist you in forming a judgment upon so important a question.

CORASMIN to ACTEMAD.

You acted most faithfully in communicating to me the information which accompanied your last letter. There has happened nothing for which I had not fully prepared myself. This was a subject, which both myself and Zingani had very long and deeply considered. By the reasonings of the most profound inquirers, combined with accurate observation, we judged it to be fully ascertained, that this was the manner in which national prosperity was to be promoted; and that the system by which one nation excluded every rival production of another, was alike hostile to the improve-

ment of both. But we were still aware, that in the commencement of so great a change, partial evil must be incurred. Those portions of the political body, which, through the operation of the preceding restraints, had grown to an unnatural magnitude, must suffer by an arrangement which distributes the vital force more equally. A painful crisis is therefore come, and we must meet it with fortitude. Public gratitude, the reward of services conferred on the public, must, when needful, be renounced; we must brave discontent for national benefit. The consciousness of doing a great good is surely a rich recompense, though we may be wronged by those to whom we do it. What confidence could we place in the disinterestedness of our own virtue, were it never subjected to such trials? Firmness is then necessary, for this is a measure which must not be abandoned. Doubtless, to Vizignan it

must be a severe trial, to see his people suffer, and name him as the author of their sufferings. The principles upon which we act have not yet sunk so deep, as not to leave him still liable to be acted upon by urgent representations, still needing support from his people's love. There is no room here for making duty pleasure; naked fortitude is called for. The hard lesson must be learned,—that even the precious meed of a nation's love may be bought too high. Yet, while we adhere inflexibly to a principle, which we conceive essential to the public welfare, every thing must be done to mitigate those afflicting accompaniments which cannot be wholly avoided. Let an account be taken of all who have suffered by the change; let the estimate be made as correct as possible; give immediate relief to the cases which appear urgent. Our resources cannot enable us to relieve the whole of the distress; still, in no in-

stance must absolute ruin ensue. Mean-time, those murmurs must be excused, which naturally arise when hardship presses ; and the people must be convinced, if possible, that we view their sufferings with concern, that we take an interest in their fortunes, and act only from the impulse of public duty. We must proceed with gentleness, with prudence ; must relieve these partial evils, till the system resume its natural tone.

From the Same to the Same.

I AM happy to find, both from your information, and from what I myself observe, that every thing proceeds as favour-

ably as, under the evil which must inevitably be encountered, we could reasonably hope. I feel, with the most tender interest, the kindness of the people towards myself, even when they wrongfully think me the author of their sufferings ; that they blame judgment only, not intention. It is cruel that they should suffer, and suffer by our hand. Every wound that I inflict, is as if the dagger were plunged into my own breast. But stern public duty forbids to refrain, forbids to sacrifice a part to the whole ; and commands us to incur these smaller evils, that great and lasting benefits may result. Every alleviation which the most tender sympathy can afford, is their due, and has, I hope, been experienced. Already the first pressure of the evil seems lightened, and the void left begins to be filled. The funds and enterprise which were deprived of their wonted employment, are turning now into other chan-

nels ; and new branches of industry, to which scope is for the first time opened, are either called into existence, or raised from their former depression. An earnest is given of that prosperity, which the influence of this new-born freedom will at last diffuse.

CORASMIN to ALTUNO.

You know the difficulties in which we have been involved, by the first consequences of measures, from which the fairest hopes of future good are entertained. Just as we were beginning to emerge from these troubles, and to see our hopes realized, a new crisis has

arisen. The agitation of recent war, by interrupting the accustomed series of agricultural labour, has given rise to a scarcity, which threatens to become severe. The spectacle is cruel to myself and to the King ; to see a people, to whom we owe ourselves, and all whose interests are ours, suffering so deeply, with scarcely any power of affording relief. Again, too, we experience the painful lot of being considered accessory to these sufferings. They cannot indeed, as lately, ascribe to us their origin ; but there are certain measures, which statesmen and the public have been accustomed to employ, in order to remedy the deficiency, the constant failure of which has never yet undeceived them ; and to these it is expected that we should now resort. The popular rage must be let loose on all who possess any portion of the commodities of which the nation are in want ; they must be pu-

nished for the imaginary crime of withholding supplies ; regulations must be made for compelling them to sell these at moderate rates. Happy indeed should I be to gratify their wishes, were it possible to think that the smallest relief could thus be afforded ; that their miseries would not be thus augmented. But we are fully satisfied that all these remedies which the vulgar demand, are prescribed by the light of political science. The desolating power of nature cannot be thus stemmed. The little that can be done, will be done with our whole heart ; those who are in the extremity of want must be saved. Individual benevolence will, I trust, do much ; and where that fails, we must step in with moderate and prudent relief ; not with any delusive and cruel remedies to aggravate the evil. The King, of whose firmness I had some dread, has acted with extraordinary fortitude under this protracted trial. But

he had studied with such zeal the principles of legislative science, that he easily comprehends and concurs in the motives by which our advice is dictated. It is true, that, when urgent complaints reach him, or when he is beset by some one who wishes mechanically to follow the former system, he sometimes gives way for a moment. "Might one not," says he, "make a trial of this measure? the people call for it, and indeed it seems not unlikely to have some good effect. It would really be a great relief to me if they could be satisfied." It is always easy to shew, that no trial could be made, without incurring all the experienced and certain mischiefs which were really the consequence of the proposed measure; and that the supposition of its success was incompatible with the very nature of things. The storm soon blows over, and he undertakes anew to brave all the odium and difficulty which

attends on perseverance. But the sympathy which he shews for his people is so genuine, and so great the activity with which he administers that relief which can be safely bestowed, that he has preserved to himself their affections, even amid their discontent. Whatever they suffered, they felt and knew that he suffered along with them. They lamented as errors, not as cruelty, his refusal to comply with their clamorous demand. Thus the odium which, in this cause, we were willing to encounter, has not befallen us. We have had nothing to endure, except what we could not hope to escape,—the view of our people suffering.

From the Same to the Same.

I WRITE this letter in more cheerful circumstances than any of those which you have for some time received. An ample harvest, which is now reaping, has already mitigated the distress felt, and will soon entirely banish it. Meantime, the new facilities which commerce derived from the late treaty, have produced advantages, which make the temporary difficulties to which it gave rise entirely forgotten. And now, with regard to the general aspect of the kingdom, my own observations, with what I learn from others, combine in giving the assurance, that all our hopes are rapidly fulfilling.

The process of improvement, at first slow, and opposed by a thousand obstacles, advances now with accelerated rapidity. Industry, freed from its fetters, and seconded by equal laws, becomes armed with energies irresistible. The most rugged barriers which nature or man can oppose, fall before her. From my distant window I see the hues of cultivation ascending the vast frontier chains, even to the craggy summit. Plains, once desolate, are covered with woods and waving harvests, and the smoke of a thousand villages. The peasant, once bowed to the ground with want and oppression, now looks erect and independent; he augments his store, assured that all will be his own. I, in some measure, have been the creator of this happiness. And Oh, thou Supreme Power above, whose will it has been to confer on thy undeserving creature a destiny so enviable, forbid that, in this great work, I should ever

view myself otherwise than as the humblest of thy instruments ! The work is thine ; and I act only in profound subordination. But, limiting my views to earth alone, it is but a small share that I could claim of the good that has been done. Some have prompted, many have co-operated ; and had it not been for the beneficence and goodness which exist in the character of the Monarch, no opportunity could ever have been given for the fulfilment of the plans that had been formed. But to you, above all, my revered friend, all this good must ascend, as to its first earthly source. Coeval with that residence with you, still tenderly remembered, is the rise of all those sentiments which have guided my progress through public life. It is you that have acted *in* me.

ZINGANI to CORASMIN.

Oh ! my friend, what a delightful journey have I now concluded ! I traversed the Cashmirian plain in the same direction as formerly, during the period of our early friendship, before the path to honours was opened. I saw the same land over which we then journeyed. I was able to compare what you found with what you have made it. Oh, Corasmin, what a feast is prepared for your eyes ! Now is fulfilled what we then saw only, as it were, in doubtful vision. Nature, under the forming hand of man, displays powers which before lay dormant, and seemed not to exist. The in-

spiring hand of industry has wrought this change. One scene pervades the whole of that vast plain, and the grove-chequered villages with which it is spotted. From every cot arises the sound of content and cheerful industry ; everywhere the stone is hewing to erect new and more commodious habitations ; new establishments are every-where forming. The plough penetrates fields which had been abandoned for ages. The waste of war and oppression is fast repairing. And this is only an earnest of what is to be ; a brighter promise remains behind. Yes, Corasmin ; nations saved, the wrongs of thousands redressed, fields covered with all the glow of cultivation ; these are the monuments which you have erected. I say this from my full heart, and without any dread lest the suspicion of flattery should be incurred.

SELMIDA to HINDALI.

You have never ceased, with provoking confidence, to foretel that my acquaintance with a certain person would have that issue which you wished. It was in vain that I insisted upon the barriers which separated us, and which limited my sentiments still to those of esteem and admiration. I was indeed serious, and fully expected to have confounded, at last, all your predictions. Yet, so it was, since I must make the confession, that seeing, hearing him, hearing all that he did, and all the just praise that was bestowed on him; this idea still occupied always a wider place within me.

I admitted it, indeed, only as that of a friend ; yet, how difficult to keep ever within these limits ! But the critical moment came, when, in that extremity of his country's danger, he went forth braving death in her cause. This peril of so valuable an object, disclosed to me secrets in my own heart, which I knew not before, and I felt how deeply he was there seated. He returned : my alarms subsided, and my mind seemed again to resume its former tranquillity. But the string which had been touched continued to vibrate, and my admiration, which perpetually increased, was no longer that calm admiration which is extorted by the merits of an ordinary friend. Yet I felt undiminished the barriers which separated us, and a mighty conflict of feelings arose. The idea of him, of what he was, and of all that he was doing, more and more filled my soul, till it engrossed it almost wholly. But still my

determination remained, to continue on the same footing as now, and not to bind myself by closer ties. Still, as I thought of the envied height to which I should be raised, my affections became rivetted to the humble lot in which nature had placed me. Such was my resolution, to which, in spite of your taunts, I might really have adhered, had not unpropitious circumstances arisen. You know the excursion which our family had arranged to make towards the frontier. No sooner does Corasmin hear of it, than he protests, with truth, I presume, that the public service calls him in that very direction. My father said, there was no possibility of refusal; to which, indeed, he did not seem very much inclined. I would then have wished very much, that I could have withdrawn from this expedition. For many reasons, as circumstances then stood, I was averse to the increase of intimacy to which it must lead. But,

after seriously considering, I found that I could not avoid it on any decent pretence, or without offending those whom I most wished to please. I had dreaded this journey, yet was I little aware of all the perils which attended it. The country over which our route lay, was one through which I had travelled long before, when my powers of observation were first unfolded, and the view of it had caused me then many painful emotions. How different was it now, and how auspicious is the change! and it was Corasmin who had made it. Before me lay the treasures of that plain, all as it were of his creation; and he himself ever present: his image, associating itself with all the beauty and happiness that surrounded us, became quite irresistible. He saw his advantage; he seized the favourable moment; and the word escaped me, which cannot be recalled. Yes, my friend, I *must* now be the wife of

Corasmin. Shall I confess it, even to you? Scarcely had the irrevocable vow passed my lips, than I felt a return of all my former scruples. I wished, I really almost wished, that these few eventful words could have been recalled. Is it not hard, that one moment, perhaps an unguarded one, should fix the destiny of a life? Yet, since so it is, and that, however great the evil were, there is no remedy, I must even prepare myself to encounter whatever is revolting in the lot which awaits me. It happens, that circumstances of which you are aware, will secure a certain interval before the tie is finally formed. I am glad of this: Perhaps, before the period is elapsed, I may become reconciled to that which now appears formidable.

HINDALI to SELMIDA.

I HAVE received your letter, just as I am setting out to a party to which I cannot avoid going. I am delighted; but unluckily have not time to write more than a very few words. Well, you see I am not so unskilful a prophetess as you endeavoured to represent me. I always guessed, that a minister, a royal favourite, would not long be left to sigh in vain. The prospect was too tempting! To be the centre of all attentions,—the dispenser of all favours,—to have every eye watching your looks,—your levee crowded by the first nobility, statesmen, princes,—relationship counted to the

tenth generation : Is there a woman on earth that could have resisted such an offer? Now, my dear, remember I expect to see every relation I have, and every one in whom I take an interest, provided for in a month. This is my first stipulation ; and I have twenty others to make, had I time ;—but I must fly. Farewell then, I am really made happy by your letter.

SELMIDA *to* HINDALI.

OH! what a scandalous congratulation is this that you have sent me: I did not know that you had been so very wicked. Well, I laughed heartily at the picture

you have drawn. . However, though in being minister's lady there was enough to appal me, it is not so very bad as you have represented it. And now let me tell you, though I am not quite in the extravagant spirits that you seem to be, my scruples are fast vanishing, and I begin to see nothing but what is pleasing in the destiny which awaits me. Those circumstances which revolted me, now that they are inevitable, must be viewed with fortitude; and I meditate, with ever-increasing pleasure, on what he is, to whom my fate is to be thus unalterably united. From my first knowledge of him, all that I saw of the greatness of his soul, of the wide circle of blessings which he diffused, made my heart glow with tender admiration; till unknowingly, unconsciously, it became wholly his: no other image could now dwell in it. I always foresaw, that if I opened it to him, he must fill it wholly; no other ob-

ject could be like or second. All things and beings here below must henceforth interest me chiefly through and for him. I cannot, indeed, hope for an equal return. Only half of his heart can be mine; higher objects must continually call him off: Never think that I will wish it otherwise. Far be it from me to seek that exclusive affection, which would be treason against the world. But to endeavour to raise my soul to the level of his,—to share those sentiments which render him so great in my eyes,—to bind myself to him by the same ties which bind him to mankind; this is a lot which may well content my higher ambition. So, then, it is vain that you wickedly endeavour to revolt me against the destiny which must be mine; there is nothing in my present view of it which is not pleasing and consolatory.

CORASMIN to ZINGANI.

I MUST quit for some days the reins of office. A letter has just reached me; —my best friend, my second father, has only a few days to live. Imperious indeed were the call of public duty, which should prevent me from closing the eyes of him, to whom it is due, if I have been at all an instrument of public usefulness. May I beg that you will give notice to the different ministers, and that you will use your best endeavours to provide, that my absence may not be felt. You shall soon hear from me.

From the Same to the Same.

My friend, it is over; the eyes of Altuno are closed. Never did I witness a death-bed so peaceful; never one which I would more wish my own to resemble. Such a maturity of age and virtue; such a satisfaction with this world, and such hopes for a future: scarcely was there room for a tinge of sadness. Never, in the brightest period of worldly prosperity, did I pass hours which I would have exchanged for those now spent by the bed-side of my dying friend. And truly, Zingani, could there be a more auspicious moment of departure? a moment when the interests of his country were in a

state of higher prosperity, and those of myself too, whom he had so entirely adopted. Who knows, in this changing world, how long it might thus have endured, or how an instant may change it ! I will not give way to sad presentiments ; I feel certainly no cause to indulge them. But it is surely a consolation, that whatever storms may hereafter arise, his departure has been made amid peace so profound.

ALVANDA to CORASMIN.

BOSTANGA, who will deliver this letter to you, is one whom I would very particularly recommend to your attention.

His intelligence and activity are truly remarkable; and I have found him of the greatest service to me on several occasions. He has my full confidence, and, I doubt not, will soon have yours. I will not advise in what department he may be most advantageously employed; on such a question I consider you as the best judge: but I think he will prove a very great accession to our administration. I have still with me a young man, his friend, also very promising, and whom I employ with much satisfaction. I cannot help thinking myself fortunate in having discovered both, and in bringing them into situations where they may contribute to the public service.

CORASMIN to ZINGANI.

You have seen this man whom Alvanda has transmitted to us. He values himself in having done so, and I believe is sincerely convinced, that he has thereby conferred a benefit on the state. But the truth is, this is not the precise kind of service which I desire and expect from him. He is too open and unsuspicuous ; he wants that nice penetration, which could enable him to distinguish genuine worth from false pretensions. This, certainly, is no ordinary man. His mind powerful, active, and capable of managing with dexterity the greatest affairs, fits him for filling with ability

any department. Yet I do not, and cannot like him; without knowing exactly how, I dread and suspect him involuntarily. This zeal for the public good, which he so loudly professes, is overstrained, overacted; on trying occasions, when I have closely observed him, the most eager personal ambition penetrates. I am really sorry to receive such men from Alvanda; yet since he has sent him, and since he really possesses the qualities which I have described, I am willing to employ him in some situation, in which he may be watched and superintended; but not to raise him higher, till we have had a much more satisfactory experience of him than at present. He will not, I suspect, very well brook such a subordinate station; but I cannot safely give him more. Better to inflict a negative injustice on one, than to incur the smallest risk of a whole nation suffering.

BOSTANGA to KAVIDI.

You will, no doubt, be anxious to learn what has been my reception here, and what are my prospects. Exceedingly bad. The whole system of management established at this court, is utterly absurd and preposterous. Those are masters that ought to be slaves, and the slaves are masters. Truly, the place of first minister is not worth holding, in the manner in which Corasmin chuses to hold it. Doubtless he has his motives. He imagines that, either on the side of prince or people, there is something which would render it unsafe to act a more vigorous and decisive part. How

easily could I show him the entire mistake under which he labours ! But the truth is, so far does he carry his silly ostentation, that he does not lay it aside even with me. I do not find that I can venture to deal with him frankly, or that there is any certain way of securing his favour, unless by seeming to receive all as genuine, and even to outdo him in his extravagant zeal. You may judge how agreeable I find this task, and what satisfaction I can expect in such a coadjutor. Add to all this, that my labour is lost ; that he evidently shuns and suspects me ; and I see no prospect of being admitted into his confidence. I have no hope of rising to any thing while he is there. You ask me, then, I suppose, what I am to do ?—Fool ! overthrow him, and rise on his ruin. Yes ; he or I must fall. For this end all means must be welcome : the intruder, conscience, must be shut out for a time. And now, Ka-

vidi, I call upon you for your aid. Your talents entirely fit you for this new line of activity. There is a stiffness in me which I cannot shake off: you bend with much more facility. In the journey which you will take for the purpose of joining me here, according to the arrangements proposed, much may be done. He has enemies; he must have them: search, find them for me: But do it with caution; tremble while you do it. First secure their confidence; afford openings to them, without any disclosure of yourself. Never let your sentiments be known till all is sure. When you begin your soundings, take care to be full of the praises of Corasmin. Your admiration of him is unbounded; he has not a more devoted adherent in the kingdom than you: at the same time, you know, it can be insinuated, that there is one single point on which you entertain some doubt, which you would really wish to

see otherwise. What that point is, depends, of course, upon the persons whom you address. For the nobility,—How galling, to see those who were once their humble dependants, who held life and property at their will, now account themselves independent, and set them at open defiance! To the merchant,—How cruel, to be driven by foreigners out of his native markets. The same principle, in some form or other, will apply to every class; and in all, surely, you will find some who may be bent to our purpose. Meantime, it is our part to court Corasmin, as studiously as if on his favour all our hopes depended. We cannot expect, indeed, to gain his good-will; but we may at least lull his vigilance.

KAVIDI to BOSTANGA.

I HAVE received your letter, and am concerned, as you may easily suppose, to find that our prospects at Cashmire are beset with such serious difficulties. I admire the bold and decisive resolution which you have formed. Acknowledging, as I will always do, the superiority of your genius, and placing all my hopes of advancement in following your foot-steps, I shall always be found a ready instrument to second your plans: too fortunate that I should be considered as useful in that capacity. Be assured, my utmost diligence has been exerted to fulfil the commission with which you have

entrusted me; but, unfortunately, I have no favourable report to make. It is incredible how satisfied I find every one: they seem disposed to shut their eyes to their own plainest interests, rather than listen to a word against Corasmin. His praises, which I begin with, are almost always re-echoed; but, when I attempt to proceed farther, the encouragement is very slender. I have gained a few; but they are not persons, I am afraid, from whom much credit can be derived. Other circumstances being favourable, they may be turned to account; but of themselves they will little avail. At present there appears no choice, unless to persevere in that quiet and cautious plan which you have marked out; to watch times and circumstances; and, meantime, to pay our utmost court to the reigning power. Do you really think it quite impossible to insinuate ourselves into Corasmin's confidence, and, through

it, gradually to undermine him? I see no other path which is not beset with danger, and almost impracticable. I must really press this proposal more earnestly than I usually presume to do. You will find me ready to take my full share in those mortifications which must be submitted to, and which, after all, will be found a cheap purchase of the great object which we have in view. I cannot think, but that we may succeed with such a fool as you describe him to be. You are sensible, that I do not often urge my advice upon you, but yield in general to your superior penetration; yet I must here earnestly request you, not to be hurried on by your natural loftiness of soul, but seriously to deliberate on what I propose.

BOSTANGA to KAVIDI.

IN vain do you urge me to become the slave of Corasmin. No; though I could bring down my mind to that humiliation, it would nought avail. He loves me not; never will love me. All my efforts to please have been thrown away upon that proud intractable spirit. The more I study to ingratiate myself, the more he shuns and suspects me. He often turns upon me an eye of scrutiny, from which I involuntarily shrink. Therefore I adhere to my first purpose, and place still all my hopes in his ruin. This I do, not merely because I hate him so mortally, but because, while he is there, my very

existence at court is precarious. A fool you call him, and such, in many respects, he certainly is; but beware of dealing with him as such. All our wisdom will be required to contend successfully against him. He has so possessed the silly King with his extravagant notions, that there will be the greatest difficulty to banish them. He sees only, as it were, with Corasmin's eyes; and will scarcely be brought to listen to the most agreeable suggestions from any other quarter. However, because I see the difficulties of my task, imagine not that I therefore despair. I trust I have invention and powers equal to any exigency, however formidable. Leave the affair to me, and it will be brought, I trust, in due time, to a triumphant issue.

CORASMIN to ALVANDA.

I MUST beg you to suspend, for a short interval, your administrative functions, and to proceed on an important mission. The state of Sablistan, weakened by a minority, and by internal dissensions, presents a tempting object to the avidity of the neighbouring powers; and there is one, if I am not misinformed, which is preparing to avail itself of the crisis, in order to absorb a large portion, if not the whole, into its own territory. This is that which we must interfere to prevent. It becomes the greatness and justice of this sceptre, that no such iniquity should be committed within the sphere of its

influence. Injured nations must look to it as their bulwark. Upon these principles we are to act; and this is what you may announce to every nation which attempts to violate the rights of others. The sword is ready to second and fulfil this determination which we announce; yet, doubtless, you will never forget how desirable it is, that no necessity should exist for drawing it.

ALVANDA *to CORASMIN.*

I LOST not a moment in obeying your call, and proceeding on the mission which you pointed out. Every thing, as I passed, bore the aspect of grand military prepara-

tion; and it was evident, that the whole force of the nation was to be called forth. On my arrival, however, I found the government still disposed to attempt throwing a veil over their intentions. The reports which had reached us were quite exaggerated; no armaments were preparing, but such as were rendered prudent, in a defensive view, by the aspect of the neighbouring states. When, however, by a series of facts and questions, I had driven them out of this hold, and when they saw our fixed determination not tamely to view the execution of such projects, they changed their ground. "The situation of Sablistan," say they, "is actually such as to render it incapable of subsisting longer, and ripe for being incorporated with the neighbouring kingdoms. A plan has been drawn for this purpose, which we were unwilling to shew till it was fully matured; but which cannot fail, we think, to meet

your approbation. Cashmire, you will see, has not been forgotten." They then shewed me their project, according to which a share, very considerable certainly, was assigned to us. I had no difficulty in divining the answer which you would wish me to give, and which consisted merely in maintaining the very same tone as before. They endeavoured to move me, only by representing the magnitude of the advantages offered, with which I in vain protested, that I felt no dissatisfaction. At length a new communication was made. "In the last," said they, "an oversight was committed, in consequence of some inadvertence, which we lose no time in correcting. The plan is now finally adjusted, by which a very large portion, somewhat more than a third, will be incorporated with Cashmire. By this new scheme, every obstacle, it is hoped, will be obviated; and the forces which your

Sovereign has assembled may be advantageously employed in combination with those of the other powers. By so doing, your government will better consider its own interests, than by vain attempts to prop up a tottering fabric." In vain did I reply as before: my negotiator, still imputing all to discontent at the smallness of the offer, gave a look of despair, as if unable to conceive what would satisfy me. The interview closed; but soon after I was sent for by the prime minister, and introduced into the most secret cabinet. Having removed all witnesses, he addressed me with the most cordial air which he could assume. "The very liberal offers," said he, "of his Majesty, may surely induce you to lay aside the formal language of diplomacy, and to treat with cordiality and frankness. To shew you, now, how entirely he is disposed to sacrifice his interests to those of your Sovereign, he is willing that your share should extend

even to the river ——. What a vast superiority will you thus have over us! Surely there cannot now remain a single objection." My answer was still the same: "I refer," said I, "to my former statement. I mentioned then my determination and its grounds; and both these remain unaltered." He shrugged his shoulders, and broke up the conference; and I saw clearly, that my longer continuance here could be of no avail. The ambassador of Kilan has since shewn me a letter from the minister, in which he says of us: "This court is different from any that I ever treated with. There is no fathoming its counsels. They take post in the common places of national honour, treaties, and I cannot dislodge them. As to the real motives upon which they act, these are entirely beyond my comprehension." I see nothing now to detain me here, but wait your instructions.

CORASMIN to ALVANDA.

You have acted in every thing according to my wishes. All that you have done receives our sanction. The whole of our disposable army is advancing to the frontiers. Assure this court, that it will all be drawn forth in defence of this just cause : Assure them too, that by an interval of peace we have not forgot the use of arms ; that never was our army more powerful than at this moment. Having made this declaration, return immediately. It may be proper, as you pass, to announce in Sablistan what is the determination of his Majesty, and for what purpose his armies are moving.

We may thus encourage the party who remain faithful to their country, and intimidate that which has lent itself to a foreign power. It is not willingly that I see war approaching ; but all its evils, I conceive, are to be braved, rather than tamely to suffer the aggrandizement of this nation by so great an injustice.

ALVANDA to CORASMIN.

I HAVE happy news to communicate. The declaration which I was authorized to make, joined to the intelligence received, of the rapid advance of our armies, has completely changed the face of affairs. The royal party have gained the com-

plete ascendancy ; the ringleaders of that hostile to their country are in chains : all is unanimity. Meanwhile, the court of Cabul, appalled by the energy of our movements, and seeing slender hope of success, have desisted from their iniquitous project. They have formally renounced their pretensions, and have begun to withdraw the armies with which they were to be enforced. We have gained for the just cause a bloodless victory.

Corasmin to Zingani.

YOUR proposal, respecting the establishment of a society for the promotion of literature, could not have been made at a

more favourable moment. Our plans for the external welfare of the nation are all accomplished, or in a train of happy fulfilment. The finances are unembarrassed, and abundantly supplied, without any pressure on the sources of public prosperity. There can be no difficulty whatever, in supplying the very moderate funds which will be sufficient to give support and lustre to such an establishment. The King will contribute his name, his presence; and will throw whatever is dazzling in royalty over institutions formed for the instruction of mankind. To you, in concert with the leading members, I entrust the arrangement of the form into which it is to be moulded, the laws by which it is to be regulated. You will, doubtless, keep in view, the limits which should circumscribe our bounty to a class of men who have other rewards to look for; and you will guard against any interference which

would fetter the natural progress of human speculation.

In regard to what you mention, as wanted for the purposes of general instruction, this is an object on which, certainly, we will be still less disposed to be sparing. Our only limits here will be that point, when a too lavish bounty would frustrate its own objects. Of such a consequence, your statement proves, that at present no apprehension can be entertained. The whole, therefore, will be placed immediately at your disposal.

There is yet another subject to which I have to allude, and which, though of minor importance, cannot be accounted altogether frivolous. There is not at present any royal residence which can be considered as worthy to represent the dignity of the Sovereign of Cashmire. While, then, every source of revenue overflows with the overflowing tide of public prosperity, it is not, I think, too much

to ask, that some small part of the superfluity should be thus spent. A Monarch who has done so much for his people, may thus have a natural love of magnificence gratified: higher purposes too may be served. For that barbarous splendour which formerly reigned, we may substitute the perfection of all the arts. Every resource may be exhausted, to render it a model to the world and to future ages. Let not this be too lightly estimated. In refining the tastes of man, in teaching him to distinguish genuine beauty from ostentatious glare, we raise him in the scale of existence, we purify his moral nature. Call then, Zingani, the sons of art around you; distribute the tasks with a nice regard to the respective merits and qualifications of each; apportion to every one his salary, not too sparing, but given with a due feeling for the genius which inspires them. We expect ample aid from you in an undertaking, which

an exquisite judgment and taste so well qualify you to superintend.

ALVANDA to CORASMIN.

I HAVE to communicate a circumstance, which will not, I think, fail to gratify you. The distant states of Balk and Koten, which had long been wasting themselves in a ruinous war, have proposed to take Cashmire as their umpire. To this step they are moved, by that high moderation, that awful and inflexible adherence to right and justice, which have appeared in its recent proceedings. I have not hesitated, in your name, to accept the reference, serious and difficult

though it be. The materials for determining will soon be transmitted to you; and I flatter myself that, from a survey of the whole of my conduct in these transactions, you will admit, that it has not failed to contribute, in some degree, both to the honour and interests of this kingdom.

CORASMIN to ALVANDA.

You judge rightly in supposing, that we should be highly gratified by your last communication, and that no delicacy in the task proposed would deter us from undertaking, and exerting all our powers to execute it. With anxiety and serious

deliberation, we proceed to an office so proud and so pleasing; the labours of which, were they far greater, would be more than overpaid, by communicating to contending nations the sacred gift of peace. But as it is of the last importance that the strictest justice should regulate a decision given in such circumstances, I have to entreat, that you will omit no means of procuring for us all the means of information. Give us your own opinion, all your views: let no mode be omitted of securing us against error, where it were so much to be deprecated.

BOSTANGA to KAVIDI.

You begin to lose all hope; you imagine that I myself despair; you are even disposed, as I see, to court advancement, by a concurrence in the reigning system. Remember, if I once perceive you seriously thus acting, I entirely cast you off. Know, that I meditate without ceasing the means of fulfilling our projects. Imagine not that our situation is desperate. I have as little prospect, indeed, as ever, of gaining the favour of Corasmin, or of any possibility of ever acting along with him. I still maintain my ground, however, and will maintain it, I trust, for a time sufficient to accomplish

his ruin. With the King, so far as I can find access to him, I stand on a very satisfactory footing. He sees in me, I believe, an eager attention and study to please, which those who think themselves more secure, do not care to exert. I see quite through him : Had I the Monarch to myself, I could soon turn and wind him as I chose. But it is dreadful to see how he is infatuated with Corasmin, and with all his chimerical ideas : there will be the greatest difficulty on earth in expelling them. All ordinary resources will here be insufficient. But there is one, which, if employed with dexterity, can, I think, scarcely fail. We must raise up a rival to this overwhelming influence ; some one whose powers of persuasion would be still more irresistible : you understand, some charming girl, from whose pretty lips he would believe any thing ; in short, Kavidi, the King must have a mistress. Now, as you are

a young man, and frequent gay society, I judge you the proper person to find out what we want. Every thing is in our favour: The Monarch is young and susceptible; the Queen must now have lost the attraction of novelty; she is, besides, a gentle insipid character, who cannot possess any strong hold of his mind. This girl must be pretty, of course; clever too, and yet not too clever; one that will rule him, and be ruled by us. For, remember, the step we take is delicate; and when we have brought our instrument into action, we may find no small difficulty in managing and directing it. I adopt it, however, without hesitation; because I conceive that there is no other channel which affords us a promise of success.

KAVIDI to BOSTANGA.

NEVER was man more struck with delight and admiration, than I am by your letter. Our case, I confess, appeared to me almost quite hopeless ; but I now see there is no extremity out of which your genius may not extricate us. The expedient is quite admirable, and well managed, as I trust it will be, may lead to the happiest success. I will venture to say, that, in chusing me for the purpose you mention, you have not greatly erred. Women and the female heart are a province with which I believe myself to be thoroughly acquainted. If there be in all Cashmire such an one as you

describe, there is little danger of her escaping my search. Fortunately, however, there is no occasion to look far; already I have in view a little personage, who seems to correspond entirely with your idea. Her name is Dalinda; a giddy thoughtless creature; fond of admiration, fonder still of power; one to whom the temptation of being favourite mistress would be quite irresistible. She, you must know, had once conceived a mighty ambition to be minister's lady. Whether she cared personally for Corasmin, I pretend not to say; but certain it is, that all her artillery was played off against him; wit, beauty, languishment; but it fell on a rock. Judge what a woman's heart must feel. This will be a powerful engine to move her; for the truth is, we shall have difficulties to encounter. Though very gay, she has never taken any step exactly like what we are now to propose. I expect to

find her full of scruples, of pride; all which, however, I hope without much difficulty to dispose of. In short, I have the most sanguine hopes of what, by her means, we may be able to accomplish.

BOSTANGA *to* KAVIDI.

I HAVE discovered another grand opening by which we may profit. Alvanda may be acted upon; not, indeed, so far as to co-operate cordially, not to become one of us, but yet so as to serve our purpose as effectually. He is inconceivably elated with the success of his late negotiations, and with the popularity which he enjoys in the district over which he

presides. It becomes thus easy to insinuate to him, that he himself, rather than Corasmin, ought to hold the supreme sway in the Cashmirian councils. You will observe, that he does by no means consent to become the enemy of Corasmin : I am forced even to profess esteem and admiration, which I so little feel. Hear how I proceed :—I begin with extravagant praises of Corasmin ; I profess myself, and you also, to be his warmest friends : then begin to hint, that there is one only whom I can consider as ranking still higher ; one to whom, in fact, the popularity of the present administration is chiefly owing ; who, if placed near the throne, and not, as it would almost seem, studiously kept at a distance, would soon rise to the first place in royal favour. He listens thoughtful, and secretly pleased ; then perhaps replies, “ Bostanga, you must not say a word against Corasmin.” “ Far be it from me,” I reply, “ to enter-

tain such a wish. Never could I desire any essential change in his situation; never any of which he himself would not own the justice: I merely know one whom I estimate still higher. Indeed I owe an apology for what has undesignedly escaped me; but I can never forbear declaring, that however the administration may be constituted, another will always, by my friend and myself, be considered as its head: it is to his interests that we unalterably devote ourselves."

Then, talking of the want of confidence with which it is sufficiently obvious that Corasmin treats us, occasion can be taken to hint, that Alvanda's recommendation is, with him, not the most powerful; that I am even afraid he might perceive the superior estimation in which I hold another; my too open nature cannot conceal its sentiments." Thus I distil the poison drop by drop, and it silently enters. "I am now considering how we may best

avail ourselves of this most important advantage. With that view I beg to receive the earliest accounts of how your mission proceeds; for it is upon that foundation that I must chiefly found my plan of operations.

KAVIDI to DALINDA.

MADAM,—Some hints which I have lately taken occasion to drop, may perhaps give you an idea of the subject on which I now presume to address you. You cannot be insensible of the profound admiration with which you have long inspired me. Think not, however, that I venture now to solicit any thing for my-

self; a nobler destiny is open, which you alone appear worthy to fill. It is but just, surely, that the Monarch should have some amiable companion, to sooth the cares of royalty, to share with him its sweets. Such an one is still wanting; for as to the poor insipid Queen, I consider her quite as nobody. Now, Madam, after surveying all the beauties of the court of Cashmire, I can discover no one whose charms can come in competition with yours. It is now in my power to remove the circumstances which have hitherto withheld you from royal notice; and when that is done, the smallest exertion of your powers of captivation must leave no doubt as to the issue. I confess I long to see you in that situation which is alone equal to your merits; surrounded by that splendour which you would so well become; the foremost in every circle, and eclipsing all that is most brilliant in our court. My impassioned ad-

miration sacrifices every hope of its own, to that of raising you to a place which alone is worthy of you. There is another object, in which you cannot fail to concur with me :—How intolerable to see this Corasmin holding the supreme sway at court, and guiding the King, as it were, in leading-strings. The horrid wretch ! how I should enjoy to see him humbled ! All his proceedings are absurd ; but that which I can least forgive, is his attaching himself to that stiff ordinary creature, Maled's daughter : yet, to such a degree is he infatuated with her, that an angel from heaven, appearing as her rival, would find him, I believe, quite insensible. He is now on the eve of marrying her : she will inevitably be minister's lady, unless some means be found to prevent her becoming so. I am distracted to think of it ; yet I cannot but feel consoled when I consider, that a slight exertion of your influence will be sufficient to effect

the banishment of both. Think seriously, my dear Madam ; you have only to announce your consent, and the path will immediately be smoothed before you.

DALINDA *to KAVIDI.*

I AM quite astonished at the letter which I have received from you. I assure you I am most highly offended. Whom do you take me for, that you should address such a proposal to me? It is very well, no doubt, that all are not blind. As to Corasmin, I should not be sorry to make him suffer a little ; but this is a strange mode which you point out of doing it. Explain yourself : per-

haps you may mean something different from what your words seem to imply; if not, I do not think I can possibly give my consent. Only consider the consequences to my honour and reputation. Since you fancy yourselves bound to fill up such a place as this, you must positively seek some other person; I will have nothing to do with it.

KAVIDI to DALINDA.

My dear Madam,—I do not know that you have altogether mistaken the object at which my letter pointed; but allow me to say, that your reasoning upon it is altogether erroneous. These objec-

tions, which the extreme delicacy of your feelings has suggested, may be applicable perhaps in ordinary cases ; but for you, with such a prospect before you ; you, to whom so brilliant a fortune is open ; for you to be restrained by such scruples, were entirely preposterous.— Only consider, Madam, what awaits you ; —to have a fountain of wealth at command ; to be the grand dispenser of court favour ; the first lords of Cashmire courting your smiles, waiting on you as suppliants. Think of the entertainments, where you would eclipse the ladies of our nobles, our princes ; balls ; assemblies ; fetes !—charms such as these, what female heart can resist ? Trust me, there is not another woman upon earth who would hesitate for a moment. I beseech you then, Madam, let not any vain scruples deter you : Receive the fortune which courts your acceptance, or which may be caught at least by the

slightest efforts. Accept, I pray ; there is not a moment to be lost.

DALINDA to KAVIDI.

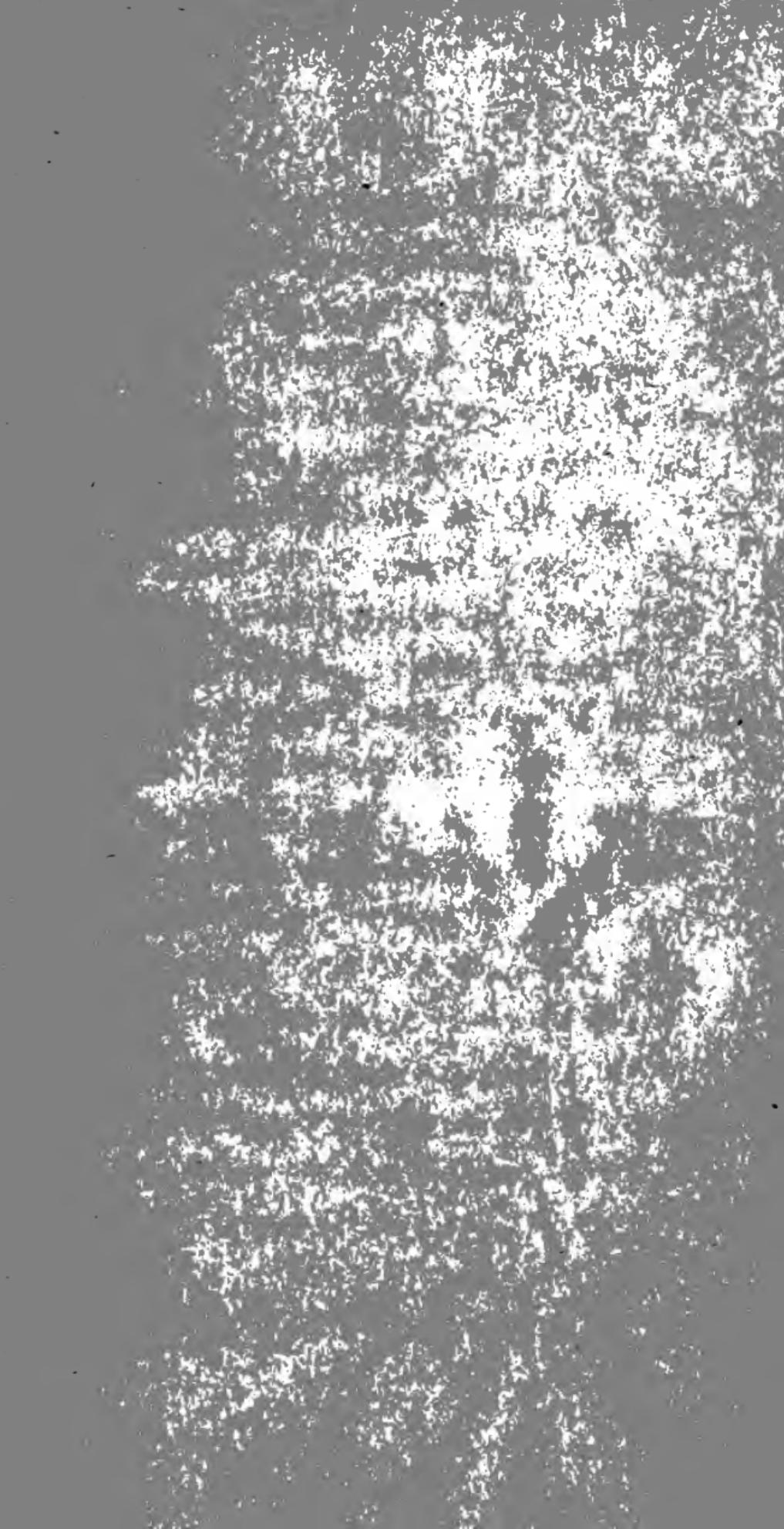
INDEED ! I was not then mistaken in your wicked purpose :—You still continue to press it ; and, I plainly see, will never desist, till you have wrung from me the consent you wish. Oh, you tempter ! But shall I really have all these things ? shall I then eclipse all the dames of Cashmire ?—Take me to the King, and we shall see what is to be done.

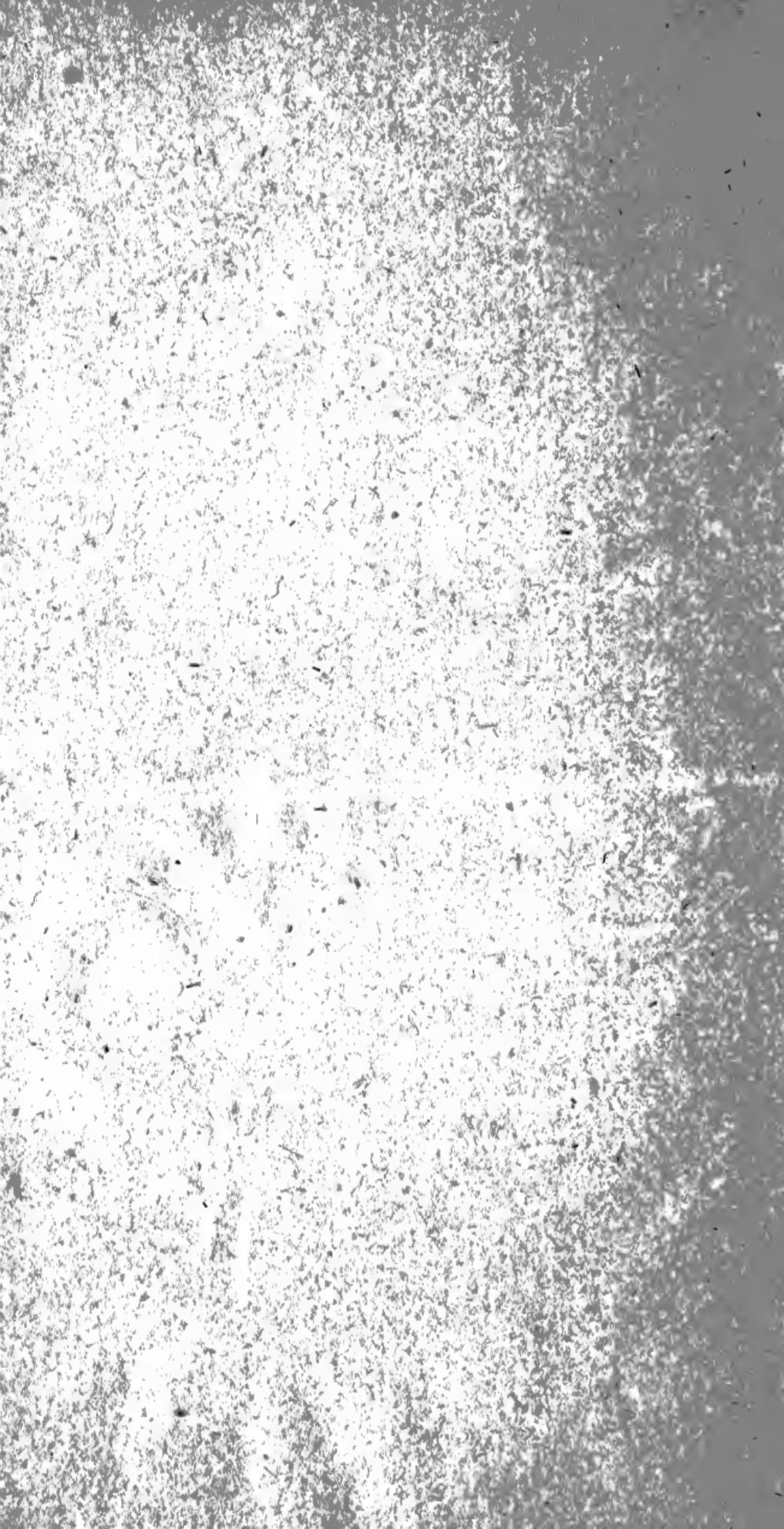
KAVIDI *to* BOSTANGA.

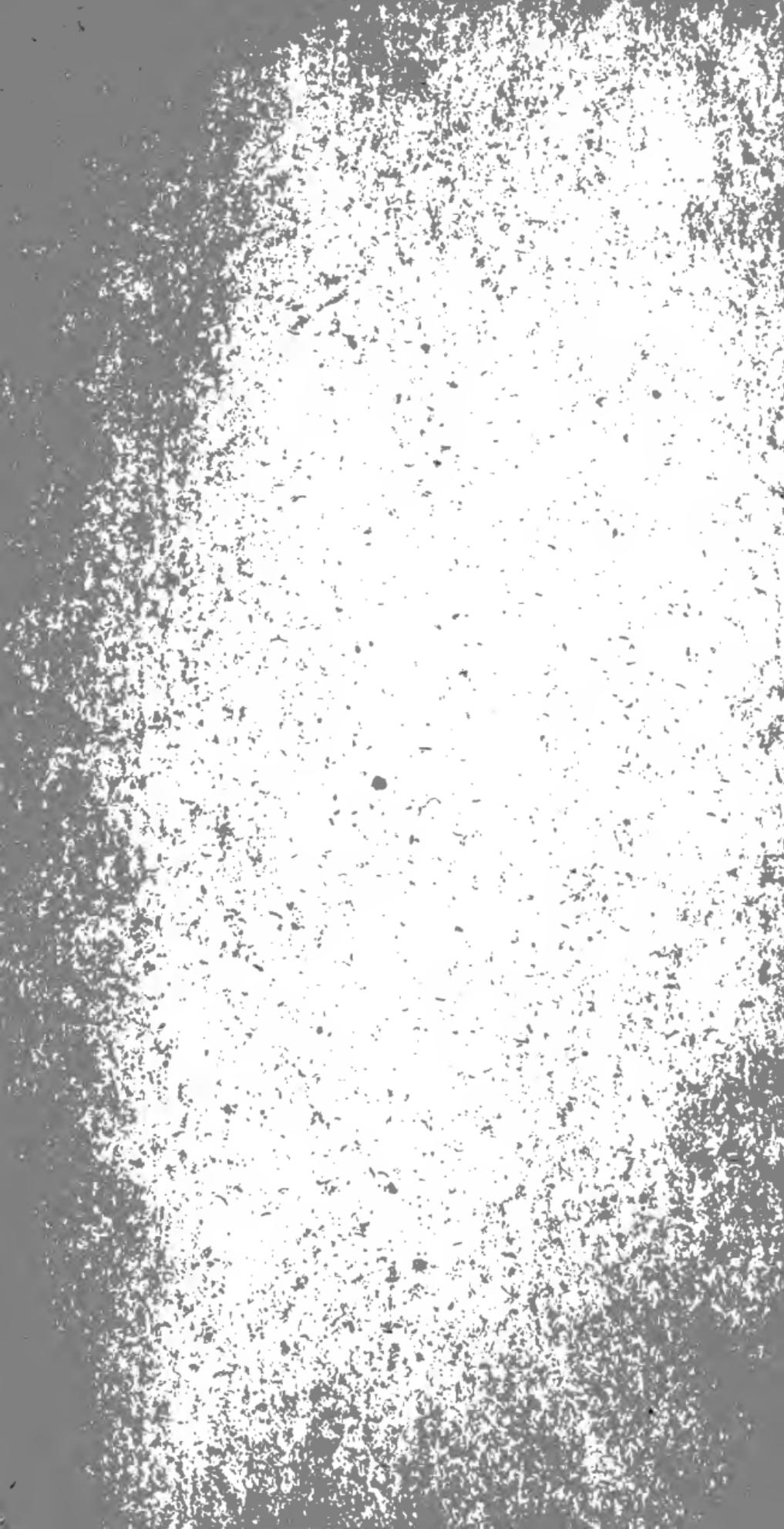
I HAVE the best possible news to announce to you.—Dalinda, after a little show of prudery, gave herself up entirely to my direction. The King has seen her, and she has exerted all her powers of pleasing. Soon, I flatter myself, shall we see him entirely in her chains. The affair, be assured, has been managed with the utmost dexterity. Corasmin has not obtained as yet the slightest scent of what is going forward: He and Zingani are busy with some grand projects, and pay no attention to what is done in our circle. To confess the truth, however, I am mortally afraid of him:

His penetration is excessive; and if it be awakened before our affairs are fully established, we may tremble for the consequence. He treats me with contempt the most intolerable; never gives me the smallest employment, nor appears to set the slightest value on all the court I pay to him. Oh! what a glorious day when we could glut our vengeance upon him; when we could trample him beneath our feet! Such a day, I trust, is preparing under your auspices. Meantime, use me as your instrument; name what I can do, and not a moment shall be lost.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.











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